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Union: Introduce Malay literature earlier

KUALA LUMPUR: Malay literature should be introduced in school curriculum at an early stage to help students improve their analytical and creative skills.

The National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) said the literature subject was important in human capital development.

"We have focused so much on material development, with subjects like Mathematics and Science given the attention at the ex-

pense of subjects like Literature," said NUTP president Anuar Ibrahim yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference at Wisma NUTP, he said due to the imbalance, it was not a surprise that many students did not regard literature as a subject.

At present, Malay Literature is offered as an elective for Form Four, Five and Six students.

There were 1,059 classes in Malay literature in 2006 but the number dropped to 982 last year.

Participants of a seminar or-

ganised by the NUTP and Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka last June urged the Education Ministry to give more emphasis to Malay literature in schools.

Universiti Putra Malaysia lecturer Dr Lim Swee Tin, who was present at the press conference, said literature subjects would encourage discussions about human nature issues and develop creativity and thinking capacity.

He said the practical aspect of literature should be given emphasis so that students would not

just memorise facts but think and analyse their answers.

The Modern Languages and Communication Faculty lecturer said the seminar suggested that the works of local authors such as A. Samad Said and Usman Awang be made the textbooks for Malay literature and the subject be introduced in Form One.

Lim said the literature of other ethnic groups should also be introduced as it would enable students to understand each other's culture and traditions better.