

Shock GE15 results can drive education forward

By [Dzulkifli Razak](#) - November 22, 2022 @ 12:23am



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The 15th General Election (GE15) results were a shock to almost everyone, some more than others.

The results provided insights into education.

Education has been undemocratic, to say the least.

Since the enforcement of the Universities and University Colleges Act in 1971, education has lacked the freedom and autonomy that define it, despite many claims to the contrary.

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Even neighbouring countries are up to speed, with Indonesia recently declaring the concept of *Merdeka Belajar, Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) under the leadership of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Minister Na-diem Makarim.

This allows Indonesia to share its education model worldwide.

Malaysia prefers to follow the diktat of "world-class" universities that are

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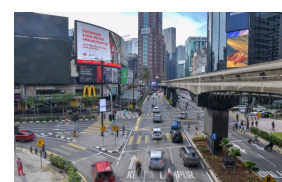
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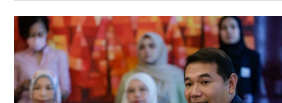
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It is more confident in its values and cultural needs in advancing itself globally with its own education mould.

This is not surprising because education is placed with culture under the same ministry as part of nurturing a global Indonesian identity.

That Indonesia hosted the G20 meeting last week is a case in point.

It opens up a new window for education predicated by MBKM that acts as a beacon lighting the way forward.

This will forge an impactful transformation of Indonesian education.

This is not to say that Malaysia lacks transformative initiatives. Far from it.

For example, in 1988, Malaysia pioneered its National Education Philosophy (*Falsafah Pendidikan Negara*), which morphed into *Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan* (FPK) in 1996.

It coincided with the launch of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Pillars of Learning, which drew several similarities to the FPK. Both were launched in the same year, but the complementarity is stark.

Unfortunately, despite the opportunities, not much has been made of it until today.

In fact, overall, even the powers that be seem less inclined to address the matter, what more given the current situation made worse by the pandemic.

In 2007, the APEX initiative was launched as part of the Higher Education Strategic Plan by the then prime minister under the theme "*Revolusi Pendidikan*".

But it was short-lived, and the APEX transformation has been hijacked post-2011 when it could have been our version of MBKM.

After all, it was realigned with the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development from 2005 to 2014 and is now feeding into the 12th Malaysia Plan.

Unlike our Indonesian counterparts, however, we are hampered by bureaucracy so much so that our education direction remains uncertain, vague and unable to command global interest.

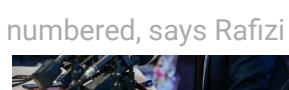
Given the GE15 shock, the education sector must drive *revolusi pendidikan* forward.

More importantly, it must create its own identity based on the FPK framework.

This is where the Undi18 first-timers become the game-changer in ensuring education continues to be relevant, where the younger generations can translate the GE15 results into "edu-action" in the future.

The writer, an NST columnist for more than 20 years, is International Islamic University Malaysia rector

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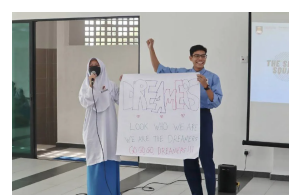
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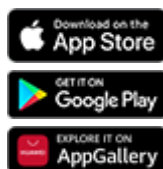
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