Chapter Four

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHING PROFESSION - THE BACKGROUND

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to the present day organisation of the Ministry of Education, while the second part will discuss a very brief history and the set-up of the NUTP.

4.1 The Ministry of Education

As in previous years, the Ministry of Education get the biggest allocation of the government expenditure for 1996. At RM8,959,719,200 it is RM 5,221,040,200 more than that given to the Ministry of Defence, the next highest contender. Compared to 1995, the amount is RM1,560,078,550 more or an increase of almost 32%.14

On May 3rd. 1995, when announcing his new cabinet just after the General Election the previous month, the Prime Minister announced that some restructuring was necessary in the Ministry of Education to `produce sufficient workforce to take the nation into the next century'15.

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Fig. 4.1: Organisational Structure of the Min. of Education from September 1, 1995.

Minister of Education

- National Library
- Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka
- ITM

Secretary General
- Policy & Quality Div.
- School & Internal Audit
- Legal Advisor

Director General of Education
- Finance Division
- Dev. & Priv. Supply Div.
- Information System Div.
- Scholarship Div.

Deputy Sec General 1
- Organisation Dev & Service Div.

Deputy Sec General 2
- International Relation Div.
- Management Service Div.

Director Tertiary Education
- Policy Mgt. & HLI Gov Div.
- HLI Financial Dev Div.

Overseas Students Welfare Div.

Scholarship Div.

Private Educ Planning & Research Div.

Registration & Stand. Div

Enforcement Div.

Teachers Education Division

Curriculum Dev Div.

Textbook Division

Sport Division

Pre Sch., Prim. & Sec Edu Div.

Special Edu Planning & Research Div.

Special Edu Service Div.

Training & Service Support Div.

Islamic & Moral Educ Div.

Missionary & Leadership Div.

Islamic & Moral Edu Cur Div.

Tech & Voc Management Div.


Polytechnic Mgt Div.


Training & Staff Dev Div.


Educ Tech Div.

Aminuddin Baki Inst.

State Educ Departments

Source: Organisational Development and Service Division, Ministry of Education
Fig. 4.2: Organisational Structure of The Ministry of Education before September 1995.

Source: Organisational Development and Service Division, Ministry of Education.
Thus, on 22nd July 1995 the Chief Secretary to the Government announced the restructuring of divisions within the ministry to provide for six new departments - tertiary education, private education, pre-school, primary and secondary education, special education, moral and spiritual education, and technical education. The Chief-Secretary said the move was to strive for academic excellence and to enhance the education system. The new organisational structure (Fig. 4.1) was to be effective from 1st September 1995.

Before that the Ministry had twenty-five divisions and units including the Schools Division, Computer Service Division, Scholarship Division, Technical and Vocational Division, Education Research and Planning Division and the Curriculum Development Centre (Fig. 4.2). The new structure means that a few were merged but none was abolished.

Like all other ministries, the Ministry of Education is headed by a Minister and he is assisted by two Deputy Ministers. The administrative head and chief adviser (i.e. Chief Executive) is the Secretary - General of the Ministry. Before November 1995, thirteen of the divisions, deemed the 'professional' divisions was each headed by a Director while each of the other division was headed by a Secretary and in the case of the Computer Service Division, by a General Manager. All the Directors were Education Officers while the Secretaries are Administrative and Diplomatic Officers. The General Manager of the Computer Service Division was a System Analyst.
At present the Directors and all the Managerial and Professional Officials in the professional divisions are Graduates Education Officers with no less than five years experience (teaching in schools) behind them. They are assisted by experienced Non-graduates Education Officers and other support staff such as clerks, typists and office-assistants. The administrative divisions are staffed mainly by the Administrative and Diplomatic Service Officers and assisted by Executives Officers and other support staff.

The new Education Minister who took office in March 1995 announced that the mission of the Ministry of Education is `to establish an education system that is world class in quality so as to develop the full potential of the individual and fulfil the nation's aspiration'.

In order to achieve the above mission, the ministry has set up its objectives as follows:

1. To create a unified and loyal Malaysian race.
2. To create a faithful, moral, knowledgeable and skilful individual.
3. To prepare the nation of its human resource needs.
4. To open and create chances of education to all Malaysians.

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16 This is the writer's translation. To get the full essence of the mission the original (in Bahasa Malaysia) is reproduced in Appendix 4. Also reproduced are the Ministry's objectives.
17 Source: Policy and Quality Division, Ministry of Education. See Appendix 4
4.2 The National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP)\textsuperscript{18}

The NUTP is not the only teachers' union in the country. There are twenty other teachers' unions and also an association for the graduates Education Officers. However, with a member of over 60,000 it is certainly the biggest and also one of the oldest union.

The NUTP was formed on 12th May, 1973, with the merger of the two largest union during that period, the National Union of Teachers, West Malaysia (NUT) and Kesatuan Kebangsaan Guru-Guru Sekolah Kebangsaan, Malaysia Barat (KKGSK). NUT was originally formed only for teachers in the English Medium Schools. However, it later amended its constitution to allow other teachers to join. The KKGSK, although the name means National Union of National School Teachers, its memberships was open to all Malay teachers who taught at National Schools and all teachers of the National Language who taught in National-Type Schools. At the time of the merger, the NUT claimed to have over 15,000 members while the KKGSK had about 5,000 strong members. The original unions, NUT and KKGSK were both first registered in 1954, KKGSK in April, and NUT on 12th August. The NUTP which is the merger of NUT and KKGSK was formally registered on 27th June, 1974.

\textsuperscript{18} Materials in this section consist of informal interview sessions with staff and officials of the NUTP in December, 1995. Some of unofficial records were also made available to the writer.
A few of the achievements that the NUTP claimed are the results of their (and their predecessors the NUT and the KKGSK) continuous struggle for the professional betterment of the teachers are:

1. Parity pay for DTC-trained teachers
2. Reducing hundreds of salary scales to only seventeen through the Aziz Commission
3. Equal pay for women teachers, medical and housing facilities for all teachers
4. With Cuepacs, the NUTP worked out the salary scales under the Cabinet Committee Report.

Latterly, what the NUTP considered as their crowning achievement was the Government’s acceptance and implementation of the Two-Tier Salary Scheme which, in their eyes had raised the status of teachers in the society particularly the non-graduates. Thus, the implementation (‘imposition’ to the unions) of the NRS so soon after the Two-Tier Scheme must be at the least, most disquieting to the NUTP leadership.

Administratively the NUTP operates on two levels - at National level from their headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, and at state-level where it has a branch in every state in Peninsular Malaysia.
The NUTP's National Executive Council is led by a President and assisted by a Deputy President, a General Secretary, a Deputy General Secretary, a Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, five vice-presidents (one each for Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil Mediums and a Lady vice-president) five Assistant General-Secretaries (also one each for the various Mediums and for the ladies) an Editor, an Education Officer and twenty-seven Council Members (chosen by the respective states).

At the branch level, the NUTP Branch Executive Committee is made up of a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, a Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. The Branch Executive Committee is also assisted in its various programmes by various sub-committees.