

Compulsory education a timely move

I REFER to the editorial "Values and the Rule of Law" (NST, Oct 3). It is true that parenting is a pivotal skill to all of us, but sadly, we see some who still feel that parenting is just about "having the kids" rather than "educating the kids".

This must be made legal, with enforcement of laws, as the Education Act 1966 (Act 550) (Amended 2002) made six years of primary education compulsory for all children aged 6-12.

But what happens after that? If parents do not care, or cannot afford it, can their children continue living with only six or seven years of formal education?

It was recently reported that the authorities will make secondary education compulsory by next year. This is timely because many western countries have made it compulsory for more than a 100 years. Therefore, the process must be expedited. Once it is legal, all parents must be educated as well on the values of education. I have seen cases where parents appear not to care if their children become dropouts.

It's a pity because children are fast learners. It is the "culture and environment of learning" and "meaning of education" that must be instilled in them. Even gifted children, if not managed well, can

become dropouts.

Education is a fundamental human right which is one of the five economic, social and cultural rights stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This right, which is Article 26 in the UDHR, states that everyone has the right to free and compulsory education, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.

Education is one of the fundamental elements in parenting. "Growing physically" means dying (later), but "educating" is lifelong, as knowledge never dies.

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