

Yet another mistake

I WISH to express my disgust over the slipshod manner in which the SRP English Paper 1 was set.

I refer to Question 39:

Every year a Dragon Boat Race in Penang during the Pesta.

- A. to be held
- B. will be held
- C. have been held
- D. was being held

Now, the big mystery begins. I am sure many candidates must have wasted precious minutes pondering over this question. Where, indeed, is the correct answer?

Despair no more, you

poor candidates (belated advice?) for the fault lies not in you. As anyone with a reasonable command of the English Language would know, ALL the multiple choices provided are wrong! Surely the correct answer is: "is held."

Yet another mistake can be found in the comprehension section. The first passage is about the rhinoceros beetle.

Question 42: The word well-known in the passage means

- A. famous
- B. popular
- C. sensitive

D. dangerous

The mystery deepens . . .

But let me read the line from which this question is based. I quote: "The rhinoceros beetle is a well-known pest. . ." Thus the word "well-known" in this context qualifies the noun "pest." One has no choice but to dismiss ALL the multiple choices as nonsensical.

"Famous" and "popular" are, in fact, synonymous in certain circumstances, for example a particular pop group can be well-known/famous/popular. But one can hardly refer to a particular pest as being famous

or popular, despite the fact that it is well-known!

The most appropriate word, I feel, is "notorious." "Infamous" should also be acceptable.

Undeniably, the standard of English has declined. There should be more quality control, not only at school and university level but also at the very top level, especially the Examination Syndicate of Malaysia.

Otherwise it would be like the case of the blind leading the blind.

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