

Govt to **consider** proposals

PM: We'll study all ideas on English usage

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Government will consider every proposal pertaining to the move to teach Science and Mathematics in English from Year One in all schools beginning next year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"We will study everything," he told reporters when asked to comment on Gerakan opposing the move and instead suggesting that English terminologies be introduced in textbooks for both subjects from Standard Four with some bilingual text to be used in Standards Five and Six.

He was speaking to reporters after flagging off the Formula 1 Powerboat World Championship

Malaysian Grand Prix 2002 at Mines Resort City in Seri Kembangan yesterday.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik had said the party's stance was that what is good for the Chinese schools should also be good for national schools.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein said every party intending to debate the issue should do it objectively.

"I would like to appeal to any group particularly Chinese-based associations to debate the matter without linking it to racial or religious issues."

He said the government would not stop anybody from debating it

but it should not fan racial or religious sentiment among the various races.

He added that based on what had been discussed in the Cabinet meetings, the move was for the benefit of all races to ensure that the future generation would be able to use English to gain more knowledge.

"It is not a question of Chinese or Malay identities. It is not an issue of the Malay or Chinese languages," he added.

When met at Gerakan's Federal Territory annual delegates meeting at Corus Hotel here, Lim was confident that the Cabinet would listen and accept the proposals because the views were "without

any racial bias or sentiment."

"I know that when the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister suggests an idea, they will still listen and accept constructive and useful views from other component parties in the Cabinet.

"Gerakan is not against the push by the Government to improve the standard of English in the country but we maintain that studies have shown that the two subjects are best learned by students if taught in their mother tongue," he added.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said the Formula 1 Powerboat Racing would become as popular as Formula 1 Grand Prix motor racing.