

Dr M: Umno has made stand on English

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KUALA LUMPUR: Umno has made a stand on the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English and will convey it at the next Barisan Nasional supreme council meeting, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Umno president said the party's supreme council meeting yesterday discussed the issue and council members gave their views.

"We agreed that Umno's stand should be conveyed to Barisan and I have been given the mandate to let them know. So, I have no intention here to give any information or explanation on Umno's position (at this stage)," he said after chairing the meeting.

On the same subject, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said yesterday the party had endorsed the use of English in teaching Science and Mathematics in Tamil schools and at the same time wanted the Government to maintain the use of Tamil in the schools.

He said the party accepted the use of English to teach the two subjects but did not want the cultural identity of Tamil schools to be eroded any further.

"The use of Tamil will be limited to 56% of the total teaching hours in a day," he said after chairing the MIC central working committee meeting here.

He said MIC would submit a request for the Education Ministry to re-train Tamil school teachers to teach the two subjects in English.

"We do not want the ministry to employ outsiders to teach in Tamil schools," he said.

He added that the use of English would not be a prob-

lem for students as it was already a school subject.

"It will be good for them to learn Science and Mathematics in English to face global competition," he said.

Meanwhile, four Barisan Chinese based component parties met for a second time yesterday to fine-tune a government proposal to teach the two subjects in English in Chinese schools from next year.

However, leaders of the four parties - MCA, Gerakan, Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) and Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) - were not available for comment after the two-hour meeting at a hotel here.

Those who attended the meeting were MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and vice-presidents Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn, Gerakan deputy president Kerk Choo Ting and secretary-general Chia Kwang Chye, SAPP deputy president Datuk Tham Nyip Shin, and SUPP secretary-general Datuk Sim Kheng Hui.

Also present at the meeting was Chinese Primary School Headmasters' Association chairman Kang Siew Kung.

In Shah Alam, Education Ministry parliamentary secretary Datuk Mahadzir Mohd Khir said the Government would consider suggestions by Chinese-based parties, including holding extra classes after school hours.

"They are just studying the most suitable module to introduce the subjects in English for Chinese pupils.

"From what I have seen and read, they have never opposed the decision," he told reporters yesterday.