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DPM defends plan to teach in English

PENDANG, Sun. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today defended the Government's plan to teach Science and Mathematics in English.

Abdullah said it was imperative to start teaching the subjects in English as English was the language of the Internet and information technology.

"Teaching them English early will enable them to grasp the language at a young age. What the Education Ministry is doing is to make early preparations for the students.

"Even the French, who are very proud of their language, admit the importance of English," he said at a meet-the-people session at Kampung Rambai, near here.

Abdullah, who is deputy Umno president, said this was among the Barisan Nasional Government's plans to improve education standards, besides building more schools in rural areas.

Abdullah said it was vital for students to master the language early as it would help them tremendously in the future.

Abdullah was commenting on the Opposition's campaign issue in Pendang and Anak Bukit.

The Opposition had said the plan to teach Science and Mathematics in English would render Bahasa Malaysia irrelevant in future.

Yesterday, Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad said the Cabinet would discuss the findings of the committee studying the move to teach Science and Mathematics in English on Friday before making any decision.

Abdullah said the Government would continue with Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction for other subjects.

Earlier in his speech at another function in Jerlun, Abdullah said Pas had nothing concrete to influence the public.

"They only know how to curse government leaders. But we must be patient and the people must continue to vote for BN. There have been a lot of changes in terms of the acceptance of the people of BN since we last came here."

Abdullah said Pas had accomplished nothing in terms of development for the people.

"Pas rule will only bring misery to the Malays whose welfare they claim they are championing."

On the issue of Islam and Pas' version of the hudud, which Pas continually raised in its campaigns, Abdullah said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had never said he rejected hudud totally.

"We cannot implement it now due to many factors. But we must remember that Islam guarantees justice for all and will not oppress its followers."