

23/10/2002

Chinese-based BN parties get a week

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Except for Chinese-based component parties which had requested a week to decide how the proposal to teach Mathematics and Science in English is to be implemented in Chinese national-type schools, others in Barisan Nasional fully supported the move.

In fact, BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamad Rahmat said other component parties wanted the proposal to be implemented in all primary schools immediately.

"However, after a thorough discussion, all agreed that it is only fair for the Chinese-based parties to be given one week to seek a solution among themselves on the implementation.

"This is fair as we are not forcing any component party to accept the proposal as this is a very important decision by the Government," he said, adding that the meeting proceeded without any heated debate.

However, Mohamad said BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad did express his disappointment that there was much resentment among some component parties to the proposal.

"None of the Government's policies in the past have ever triggered this kind of reaction from component parties.

"However, Dr Mahathir was able to convince them. There was no heated argument at all. In fact, everyone was level-headed when they discussed the issue," he said after the three-hour BN supreme council meeting today ended.

Mohamad said he was confident the proposal to teach Science and Mathematics in English would proceed as planned in all primary schools next year with a modification for Chinese national-type schools.

"The Chinese schools will be able to implement the proposal simultaneously like the rest of the national schools by next year.

"We have also discussed counter proposals which they tabled during the meeting, some of which were quite practical."

However, Mohamad refused to elaborate on the details of the counter proposals submitted by the Chinese-based component parties.

Mohamad said BN's decision and endorsement on the implementation of teaching Mathematics and Science in English would be submitted to the Government.

In Kuching, Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said the Federal Government's proposal to introduce teaching Science and Mathematics in English in all primary schools next year has the backing of all BN parties in Sarawak.

Taib, who is also State BN chairman, said the move was appropriate and timely.

The four State BN component parties are Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Sarawak, Sarawak United People's Party, Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak and Sarawak National Party.

He spoke after opening the Second National Conference on Cognitive Science today (See Page 8).