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Mahathir-English

CABINET WILL BE CONSULTED ON ENGLISH MOVE, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he will discuss with the cabinet the question of at which level English should be used to teach Science and Mathematics in schools.

He said that this was due to the fact that there were those who were of the view that it should start at the secondary-school level.

Speaking to reporters after opening a conference on taxation in Seri Kembangan here, he said: "There are those who suggest that it should start at the secondary-school level, there are also those who suggest that it should start at Standard Four. So, we're still considering, we haven't decided.

"Of course I must discuss with my cabinet. This is not my business, this is the Ministry of Education's business. I cannot overrule them, I'll have to ask them."

Dr Mahathir was responding to questions surrounding his meeting yesterday with the Associated Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCCIM) and seven major federations of clans and associations on the much debated move by the government to teach the two subjects in English starting from next year.

He said, nevertheless, it appeared that the majority of the Malays and the Chinese, including language experts, had accepted the importance of English and the need to improve the standard of the language.

To a question, Dr Mahathir said that whatever the decision would be, it would not stop the government from equipping schools with computers and other educational gadgets needed to improve the learning of English.

The prime minister was also asked on the decision of the MCA Central Committee on Aug 29 not to reappoint deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek as chairman of the party's disciplinary committee.

Dr Mahathir said: "Since Datuk Lim Ah Lek himself is embroiled in problems, it's definitely not suitable for him to become the chairman of the party's disciplinary committee."

At the same time, however, he said, there should have been consultations among the parties involved on who should be in the committee.

"But there are various accusations that consultations were not held. I don't know, this is MCA's problem, I don't wish to interfere," he said.

-- BERNAMA

MAM ZS RM