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BN supreme council to make final decision today

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Tomorrow's Barisan Nasional special supreme council meeting will be the last to discuss the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English at all national-type Chinese primary schools.

BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamad Rahmat said a final decision would be made at the end of the meeting.

Mohamed, when contacted today, said representatives of all 14 BN component parties would attend the meeting.

He said MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik would present a proposal by the four BN Chinese-based parties to the supreme council on how Mathematics and Science should be taught in English at Chinese schools.

"We will study the proposal to see if it is viable and the method to be used in the teaching of the two subjects for a decision tomorrow."

At last Tuesday's BN supreme council meeting, the four Chinese-based parties - MCA, Gerakan, Sabah Progressive Party and Sarawak United People's Party - were not agreeable to the Government's proposal to teach the two subjects in English at national-type Chinese primary schools.

They were given a week by BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to submit suggestions on how to implement the plans in Chinese schools.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which initially was with the four Chinese-based parties, said last Wednesday it would support whatever decision made by the Cabinet.

Mohamad hopes the four parties will take into consideration the interest of the BN.

"We have given them enough time to come up with the proposal and we hope it will be a viable solution."

Meanwhile, Dr Ling said today he was confident a consensus would be reached at tomorrow's BN supreme council meeting.

"In BN, there is enough wisdom, through a long history of co-operation, in which decisions are made for the good of the nation and for the people," said Dr Ling, who is also Transport Minister, before chairing the Ministry's post-Cabinet meeting in Putrajaya.

He added that the issue was not discussed at today's Cabinet meeting and tomorrow's meeting would iron out the technicalities on the counter-proposal by the four Chinese-based parties in BN.

Asked what would happen if there was no consensus among BN component parties tomorrow, Dr Ling said: "Don't speculate."

Dr Ling said yesterday the four parties would propose six new periods per week be included into the existing timetables for all Chinese primary schools next year.

Two periods are for English and two each for the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English. The programme will begin from Standard One.