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Lim-English

CHINESE-BASED BN PARTIES PROPOSE 2-3-3 FORMULA, SAYS DR LIM

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 30 (Bernama) -- The four Chinese-based Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties has suggested eight periods per week be allocated for three new subjects to be taught in English in the timetable of Chinese primary schools next year.

Gerakan President Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said under the 2-3-3 formula agreed upon by MCA, Gerakan, Sarawak United People's Party and Sabah Progressive Party at their final meeting yesterday, two periods would be allocated to teach English while three periods each for Science and Mathematics to be taught in English in Chinese primary schools.

"As a result of that, we have to take away some periods from the existing timetable," he told Bernama in an interview.

Dr Lim said the seven periods for Mathematics currently taught in Mandarin would be reduced to six periods per week and another three periods in English.

"Science will taught three periods in Chinese and another three in English," he said.

Dr Lim was referring to the existing 45 periods per week in the Chinese primary school timetable (from Standard One to Three) and 48 periods per week from Standard Four to Six) for eleven subjects.

The subjects are Bahasa Malaysia (nine periods), Mandarin (15), Mathematics (seven), Science (five), Moral (six), Music (two), Health and Physical Education (three), Arts (two), Living Skills (two), Local Studies (four).

Chinese primary schools currently have five periods per week for Science subject and seven periods for Mathematics. Currently, English is only taught in Chinese primary schools at Standard Four, Five and Six.

"Health and Physical Education periods will be reduced from three per week to two. With this, we can safely say the Chinese primary school will also turn into a three-language school," he said.

With the 2-3-3 formula, the existing 45 periods per week would be increased to 50 periods per week while maintaining the existing nine Bahasa Malaysia language periods per week.

Dr Lim hoped the formula would be acceptable to all parties involved even to the English-educated Chinese parents who want more English to be taught in national and vernacular schools.

He said the formula had been forwarded to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also BN Chairman, to be tabled at the BN Supreme Council meeting tomorrow.

Dr Lim hoped the BN Supreme Council would accept the formula.

"I would like to put on record that this is not a fight between the Chinese and Malays and nobody has asked for Chinese schools to be dissolved since they are already there since pre-independence days.

"It is a matter of adjusting to fix it, I think the Chinese primary schools will like it because the schools have been asking for English right from primary one.

"This issue (English to teach Science and Mathematics) has been blown out of proportion," he said.

He said the parties appreciated Dr Mahathir's views on the importance of English as well as to have Science and Mathematics to be taught in English from primary one.

"We agreed on that, whether we like it or not, we have vernacular

schools and the system has been there even before Independence and after Independence and no one has said you want to dissolve the Chinese schools," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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