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## Seeking a common stand

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Barisan Nasional supreme council meeting tomorrow hopes to reach a common stand on the Government's proposal to teach Mathematics and Science in English in all primary schools.

The meeting, to be chaired by BN chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, would listen to the views and also reservations on the proposal from all 14 component parties.

BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat said today the issue was expected to be hotly debated at the meeting despite it not being on the agenda.

"The proposal has become a very hot issue, especially now that the MCA is opposing the implementation in Chinese primary schools.

"It will be discussed thoroughly. We might also make a stand after the meeting," he said.

Yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the BN supreme council would listen to reservations raised by component parties on the proposal but the final decision on the matter would be made by the Cabinet.

On Friday, the MCA, which is the second largest BN component party and the largest Chinese-based party in the ruling coalition, made a stand against the policy being implemented in Chinese primary schools.

Gerakan is the other BN component party which had made a similar stand earlier.

Mohamed said it was important for BN to speak with one voice on an issue which is of importance to the nation.

"We are here for the interests of all Malaysians. The proposal will involve a new paradigm and therefore must be addressed carefully for the interests of the people and not for one particular race," he said.

Mohamed said political parties should discard sectoral interest and bear in mind the interest of the nation.

On the stand taken by the MCA central committee, Mohamed said: "It is a stand taken by one component party in BN.

"We have yet to hear what the other parties have to say."

In July, Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad announced that Science and Mathematics would be taught in English for Standard One, Form One and Lower Six next year.

Chinese education associations and political parties had opposed the move. They said the two subjects should be in English only from secondary school level.

The Government was forced to take stock of its earlier announcement.