

20 AUG 2002

Abdullah-English

OUTCOME OF MEETING ON ENGLISH ISSUE TO BE REFERRED TO DR M

MELAKA, Aug 20 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he will refer to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad the outcome of today's discussion among Barisan Nasional component parties on the plan for schools to use English to teach Mathematics and Science

"It's not right for me to announce (the outcome) before I meet the prime minister," said Abdullah.

The deputy prime minister said he had the opportunity to get the views of all BN component parties on the matter during the meeting held at his office in Putrajaya.

"I will convey their decisions to Dr Mahathir, as the BN chairman and prime minister," he told reporters after closing the convention of the Malaysian Former Elected Representatives Council (Mubarak) here.

Abdullah, who is BN deputy chairman, said the leaders of the component parties would also be meeting Dr Mahathir to discuss the matter at a date to be fixed by the prime minister.

Abdullah said today's meeting, attended by all the component parties, was conducted in a cordial atmosphere .

Among those present were MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and People's Progressive Party (PPP) president Datuk M. Kayveas.

Abdullah hoped the follow-up meeting with Dr Mahathir would produce good results.

Asked if today's meeting had positive effects, Abdullah said: "It was positive in one aspect, but otherwise in another aspect.

"I called for consensus so that nobody will later come out with conflicting views.

"Actually, all of us understand the statements that have been made (on this matter), there's no dispute. Kheng Yaik made a statement, after that Kayveas made a statement. We clarified what the statements meant," he said.

Abdullah was referring to the public disagreements between the chiefs of Gerakan and PPP on the plan to use English to teach the two subjects in schools.

The deputy prime minister said the issue would not be resolved by making statements through the media.

In his speech earlier, Abdullah said Dr Mahathir had agreed to consider all views on the matter before making a final decision.

"BN members know very well that our leader (Dr Mahathir) is someone who likes to hear all views, and make a decision that will benefit everyone," he said.

Abdullah said the government would step up the teaching of both Malay and English at all levels of schooling.

"Malay and English will continue to be subjects that must be taken by all students," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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