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Mahathir-English

SCIENCE AND MATHS IN ENGLISH: BN REACHES CONSENSUS, SAYS DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 22 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties have reached a consensus to teach Science and Mathematics in English in all schools, including in Chinese primary schools, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister, however, said implementation of the policy in Chinese schools might be slightly different but still with the same spirit.

He said Chinese-based BN components have asked for a week to discuss among themselves to come up with the best approach to implement the proposal in Chinese schools.

"We want to try so that next year we can start together with the approach decided by the Chinese schools, but there are no problems with other schools, everybody has agreed," he told a media conference after chairing the BN Supreme Council meeting.

Dr Mahathir, who is also BN Chairman, said after holding consultations, the Chinese-based component parties would report to him on any changes or counter-proposals deemed suitable for the Chinese community's interests.

Last Sunday, newspapers reported that the MCA Central Committee, at its meeting on Friday, decided to reject the government's proposal to implement the policy in Chinese primary schools next year.

That decision was synonymous with the views of Chinese education organisations which were reported to have said that the move was only suitable to be implemented in secondary schools.

To a reporter's question, Dr Mahathir said that at the moment component parties representing Chinese had their own views on the matter and needed time to work out an approach agreeable to all of them.

Apart from that, Dr Mahathir said today's meeting also reached consensus that Science and Mathematics in all secondary schools be taught in English.

He said the component parties also agreed that an enhanced version of English be taught from primary schools until secondary schools for the purpose of improving the command of English among students.

"All schools, national schools, national-type schools, all agree to teach English from primary schools," he said.

Meanwhile, BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat told reporters afterward that basically nobody from the Chinese-based parties had said no to the suggestion.

However, he said, all of them had told the meeting that they wanted to iron out some of the problems they have about the issue before proceeding with its implementation.

Asked whether the implementation in Chinese schools would be different from that of other schools, Mohamed said the BN Supreme Council would have to wait until the Chinese-based parties completed their meeting on the matter.

-- BERNAMA

NM MAM AFY YBY