

Data shows better Maths, Science results during PPSMI
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The Parent Action Group for Education (Page), who are at the forefront in the struggle to have Maths and Science taught in English, today said that research findings found that the performance of students in the subjects of English, Mathematics and Science improved when the latter two subjects were taught in English.

Quoting research by the 2010 update report for the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals for Malaysia, Page said that results show that the policy was starting to work when the decision to abolish it was made.

The results also showed an improvement in performance in mathematics and science in rural schools.

english medium for maths and science education in chinese school“PPSMI is working, even for the rural students... (The examination results) show improvement in English, no reduction in Bahasa Malaysia and improvements in Science and Mathematics in the last few years,” Page said, referring to the policy by its Malay language acronym.

Tracing performance national and vernacular school performance in science and mathematics from 2001 to 2009, the research found that the passing rates were “the highest in 2007”.

It took a dip in 2008 but picked up again in 2009, which was the same year the government decided to phase out the policy. The policy was introduced in 2003.

“The best achievement in English was in the year 2008, and the trend is on the incline since the start of PPSMI,” Page said.

Student performance in Bahasa Malaysia remained constant, showing that the policy had no effect on mastery of the national language, although some decline was seen in vernacular schools.

The study traced a big dip in passing rates for lower secondary assessment (PMR) in Science and Mathematics in 2004, but marked improvement from 2006 to 2009.

“English improved, evident in the year 2003 and 2009 with PPSMI in operation. Bahasa Malaysia remained constant throughout,” Page said.

‘Rural students did better’

The Education Ministry also refutes claim that rural students are left behind by PPSMI, as these students consistently outperformed their urban friends in the subject of Science while it was taught in English.

“The highest achievement in Science (pass rates for SPM) was in 2008, by rural students... Clearly the rural students were able to cope with PPSMI,” the NGO noted.

Rural students also showed improvement in Mathematics, with SPM pass rates for the subject on a significant upward trend since the introduction of PPSMI.

“The best percentage increment (of pass rates for mathematics for SPM) took place between the year 2009 and 2010, recorded by rural students,” it said, referring to a leap of about four percent.

Rural students followed an upward trend in English with the passing rate for the subject up from 61.4 percent in 2004 to 71.2 percent in 2010, while in urban areas, students performed 7.3 percent better in

2010 compared to 76.4 percent in 2010.

Consistent with PMR and school examination results, passing rates for Bahasa Malaysia in SPM remained fairly constant from 2004 to 2010.

According to Page, this evidence clearly goes against claims by the government as well as anti-PPSMI PAS-led Gerakan Mansuhkan PPSMI (GMP) who claimed that only 3 percent of pupils benefit from the policy.

Insisting that the issue of education is above politics, Page opined that GMP's move was politically expedient as they are appeasing nationalists without fear of losing the votes of parents who support the policy.

This is because frustrated parents who support the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English, it said, would by default vote against the BN government to PAS' benefit.

Last-ditch effort

"It is not about politics. It is about the children, and parents want what is best for their children. The Education Act 1996 stipulates that 'pupils are to be educated according to the wishes of their parents'.

"Not teachers, not principals, not parent-teacher associations and most definitely not politicians or deluded national language linguists," the NGO said.

It added that this "last-ditch effort to urge the government to offer the PPSMI option to parents" already has the support of 100,000 parents who have registered with the group.

muhyiddin yasin and ppsmi english language education Earlier today, Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said that offering such an option would be "a mess" as the ministry would have difficulty providing teachers to cater for schools who opt for the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English.

As such, the ministry has closed its doors for discussions on such matters and will not be offering choices to parents.

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