

## **'PPSMI option not satisfactory solution'**

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Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's announcement on the Teaching and Learning of Science and Mathematics in English (PPSMI) does not offer a satisfactory long-term solution to the poor standard of English, science and mathematics in schools, the DAP says.

"DAP welcomes Muhyiddin's announcement on PPSMI last Friday, although it is not a satisfactory long-term solution to address the problems of raising the standards of English, mathematics and science among our students for Malaysia to enhance its international competitiveness with the rest of the world," DAP veteran Lim Kit Siang said in a statement today.

Lim (right), who is also Ipoh Timor MP, slammed the minister for an inconsistent education policy, singling out his "flip-flop" on the PPSMI issue.

"Muhyiddin Yassin's denial that he had been inconsistent on the government policy on the teaching and learning of science and mathematics in English (PPSMI) has only made him a 'flip-flop minister who denies that he flip-flops'," he said.

Muhyiddin's announcement in July 2009 that PPSMI would be abolished, Lim said, was "as disastrous as the cabinet decision in 2002 to rush headlong into implementing PPSMI for Standard One for all national, Chinese and Tamil primary schools without any preparation or research whatsoever".

On Nov 3, Muhyiddin announced that the decision to discontinue the PPSMI policy was final.

However, following intense pressure from the parents' groups, the minister said the next day that students who were already learning science and mathematics in English would be given an option to continue in the language.

This means the complete reinstatement of the Malay language in the teaching of mathematics and science will only see light in 2016 for primary schools and 2021 in secondary schools.

However, the Parents Action Group for Education (Page) has taken the minister's latest announcement with some caution.

'Continue PPSMI indefinitely'

Meanwhile, Malaysian Indian Progressive Association (Mipas) secretary-general Barathidasan Saminathan also described Muhyiddin's decision as a "flip-flop" in a statement today .

Barathidasan of MIPAS Barathidasan (right) also questioned whether Muhyiddin was aiming to appease parents in the face of a looming general election.

He noted that Page had earlier threatened that unhappy parents would vote for the opposition if schools were not given the option to continue with PPSMI.

Despite doubts over the government's sincerity, Barathidasan called on Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to intervene in the matter in order to retain PPSMI indefinitely.

"Mipas also hopes that the Education Ministry will work to making English language a compulsory passing subject in SPM and English literature a compulsory subject in schools."

‘Don’t waver on PPSMI abolition’

Also reacting to Muhyiddin's announcement was Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (Isma) , which described the move as yet another delay to upholding the Malay language as the national language.

"Isma is concerned that the inconsistency by decision makers will cause continued restlessness among the people on the future of their children's education and the fate of the Malay language as the national language being gambled," Isma president Abdullah Zaik Abdul Rahman said.

In a statement today, Zaik said the government should be tough in upholding the Malay language and should not bow to political pressure.

"Isma warns any party against taking advantage of the current political scenario to issue threats against the government if the PPSMI is discontinued," he added.