

**PM troubled by ministry's dilly-dallying over English policy**  
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has urged the Education Ministry to expedite the decision on the use of English as a medium of instruction for science and mathematics in schools.

According to Bernama, the premier said there were strong calls for the abolishment of the policy, particularly from the Malay community.

"I hope a decision would be made soon. If not, NGOs would keep up the pressure and take action, causing the issue to become bigger," he told reporters at a function in Petaling Jaya today.

Abdullah said that the Education Ministry has had several meetings with NGOs to discuss the issue but the ministry is not ready to make any decisions yet.

**Crescendo of protest**

A decision was supposed to be arrived at before the school term began this year.

Of late, there has been a crescendo of protest against the use of English as a medium of instruction for science and mathematics.

The issue gained more prominence when Malay academics, linguists, teachers and literary authors voiced their objections against the policy.

The controversial policy implemented in 2003 by then Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Abdullah's comments comes in the wake of a huge street protest in Kuala Lumpur against the controversial policy.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak said English was important in a globalised world but that the government would continue to ensure Malay was the official teaching language.

"Mastering foreign languages does not necessarily erode an individual's identity," he told Bernama news agency.