

## **New policy on Science and Maths may start next year**

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Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin today said his ministry was looking at the possibility of implementing the teaching of Science and Mathematics in the national language in 2011 for Year One pupils.

"However, this will depend on several factors like whether there will be enough teachers, and whether the new curriculum and Science and Mathematics textbooks will be ready by the end of 2010," he told reporters in Parliament.

Muhyiddin said for Year Four, Form One and Form Four students, the implementation of the new system of teaching in Bahasa Malaysia and vernacular languages would commence in 2012, to enable the ministry to make proper preparations.

He also said the people should not be unduly worried about the reversal of policy as the government was already taking preliminary measures to implement the new policy in 2012.

"We may even have to recruit English teachers from abroad," he said, adding that the implementation of the new policy also meant the urgent need to produce Science and Mathematics textbooks in Bahasa Malaysia as well as a new curriculum for teaching English.

### **No reversal in policy**

Earlier in the Dewan Rakyat, Muhyiddin said the government will not return to the policy of teaching and learning Science and Mathematics in English (PPSMI) as the new policy of dignifying Bahasa Malaysia usage and raising English proficiency (MBMMBI) is in line with the country's need to dignify Bahasa Melayu as the national language.

Muhyiddin said towards this objective, the government would thus not turn back despite appeals and pressure for PPSMI to continue, as the government could not please every group.

"However, their views have been considered in planning and implementing the MBMMBI policy," he said in his reply to Mohd Nor Othman (BN-Hulu Terengganu) who wanted to know whether the government could ensure that it would not return to the old policy.

Muhyiddin, who is also deputy prime minister, said to avoid problems when implementing MBMMBI as what happened with PPSMI, the government had set 2012 for its implementation so as to give enough time for preparations, unlike the six months taken to prepare for PPSMI's implementation.

For instance, he said, the ministry would need 13,000 additional teachers while to improve students' English proficiency, it would need many teachers who had mastered the language, including the 1,000 to be recruited from next year.

To a question from Mohamed Azmin Ali (PKR-Gombak) whether former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's strong statement against the PPSMI being discontinued would have an impact on the current administration, Muhyiddin said he believed that Mahathir did not mean asking the government to reverse its new policy.

"He (Mahathir) understands...that it was the decision of the Barisan Nasional government

and he's an Umno and BN supporter. And I had already stated that is was not all about the national language but also the English language. So, English usage will also be strengthened."

- *Bernama*

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