

**PM: No shift in vernacular school policy yet**  
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said today the government will consider the views of the people before making a decision on the proposal to implement a single stream school system.

He said the government will only change any policy if it had the people's agreement, otherwise it would retain the existing policy.

Najib (*right*) said a change to a single stream school system required a major shift in policy and it raised the question of whether the people were ready to forgo their right to choose the type of education they wanted.

"I think there is no final decision yet on the matter among the people; some are in favour of a single stream school system while others still want to retain their right to choose.

"As long as we (the government) have not made a decision on the matter, I do not want to see disputes in the society because education is a most sensitive subject," he told reporters after attending a gathering of Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) employees at the TNB Sports Club's multipurpose hall, in Kuala Lumpur.

**Varied opinions**

The prime minister was asked to comment on the proposal by several members of parliament for the government to introduce a single stream school system following the idea mooted by historian and academician Prof Emeritus Khoo Kay Kim last week.

Khoo had proposed a restructure of the national education system, including the implementation of a single stream, to ensure attainment of the goals of the 1Malaysia concept.

He had said that the existing school system with various streams did not help the people really understand the meaning of the concept.

Najib said there were varied opinions on the question of education.

"We started out with a situation where we gave every Malaysian citizen, ethnic group and community the right to choose the type of education they want.

"We will only change any policy based on the people's wishes. If the society is ready to make a change, we will introduce the change.

"If the society is not ready, we will carry on with the existing system," he said.

Najib said it was pointless for the government to introduce a single stream system if it were to lead to political and social disputes and tension because any government decision should be aimed at attaining greater unity.

In an immediate reaction, MIC deputy president G Palanivel said Najib made the right move by announcing that vernacular schools would remain.

"By his statement, the prime minister has cleared the confusion that would otherwise, have been another setback on the 1Malaysia concept.

"His statement has clearly given meaning to promote the concept among all races," he told *Bernama*.

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