

## **The Ministry Of Education Must Allow For Flexibility In The Teaching Of Mathematics And Science In English**

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The DAP wishes to state our position in support of the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English (PPSMI) in schools where a determined majority of parents have expressed a preference for it. This is especially in urban schools where the level of competency in English is substantially higher than the rural districts.

DAP Parliamentary Leader Lim Kit Siang had 2 years ago called upon the Cabinet to endorse "the call of Parents Action Group for Education (Page) that schools should be given the option to teach science and mathematics in Bahasa Malaysia or English or in one's mother tongue" and maintain "the use of English as medium of instruction for mathematics and science in secondary schools".

The key reasons why the PPSMI policy was withdrawn by the Government are the inadequacy of the teachers as well as the inability of students, particularly from rural background to cope with the use of English at such a young age.

Therefore the reversal of the 10 year old PPSMI policy should not be a complete one - one that throws out the baby with the bath water - but one which takes into account the advantages and disadvantages learnt over the past 2 decades. The new policy must incorporate the flexibility where PPSMI remains an option for schools in the country where parents express support for it.

We reject the excuse given by Deputy Prime Minister who argued that giving the option to schools will create havoc "*kacau-bilau*" to our education system. Firstly, these schools have already been conducting their lessons for Mathematics and Science in English over the past 10 years, hence there will be no extra effort incurred to retain PPSMI in these schools. Instead more effort will be required to withdraw PPSMI.

Secondly, and more importantly, every effort should be made to ensure that our schools are able to produce the best human capital for Malaysia as we seek to be part of the knowledge economy, to become a high income nation.

The important principle that the Ministry of Education must adopt is that advanced students should not be held back because of students who lagged behind academically. If parents prefer English as the medium of instruction and the students are more than able to cope, then every effort should be made to allow such schools to continue with PPSMI.

Therefore the argument of administrative hassle as a result of providing the option to parents and students is completely unacceptable as the quality of education our students receive is of paramount importance.

We call upon the Ministry of Education to review its decision to withdraw its decision to withdraw PPSMI completely and to allow room for certain schools to proceed subject to meeting certain requirements such as parental approval and students' performance.

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