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Boost for national schools

More Chinese and Tamil language teachers to be recruited from next year

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PUTRAJAYA: More Chinese and Tamil language teachers will be recruited from next year onwards to fully implement the Pupils Own Language (POL) policy in around 7,000 primary schools nationwide.

This is to boost the profile of national schools and cater to parents and students who want Chinese

and Tamil to be taught in schools.

"I have directed the ministry director-general (Tan Sri Alimuddin Mohd Dom) to ensure that schools get the necessary teachers from next year onwards," said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin in a question and answer session at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here yesterday.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, was responding to a ques-

tion on racial segregation by choice, in reference to non-Malay parents opting to send their children to vernacular schools instead of the national variant.

On June 13, Muhyiddin spoke favourably of POL as it catered not only to the expansion of knowledge but also to the fostering of unity.

He added then that although the POL policy was in place, it had yet to be implemented.

Sources from the ministry said that only 511 primary schools had the necessary teachers to teach either one, or both, of the languages to date.

To ease the shortage of Chinese school teachers, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak recently announced that the Government would allow qualified Unified Examination Certificate holders to enter the Institute of Teacher

Education.

Earlier, Muhyiddin gave a speech on "The Role of Education in Leadership Development" at the Perdana Discourse Series.

He said there was no time to waste as Malaysia urgently needed to produce the right human capital that would drive the economy to the next level of development.

"We cannot be content with the old way of doing things," he said.