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# Mahathir backs PPSMI policy

## Advocating use of English does not show lack of patriotism, says former PM

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**PETALING JAYA:** Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has voiced his support for groups advocating the use of English in the teaching of Science and Mathematics (PPSMI).

The former prime minister said these groups did not lack patriotism but were concerned that Malaysians needed to keep abreast

with knowledge.

"It's not a question of a lack of nationalism," he told reporters after his executive talk at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris here yesterday.

"In fact, it is the true nationalists who want their people to possess more knowledge - not just being able to speak Malay."

Parents Action Group for Education Malaysia chairman Datin Noor Azimah Abdul Rahim said

PAGE was set up to ensure that parents would do "the right thing for all Malaysian children".

"We are talking about them acquiring knowledge," she said yesterday.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin had announced in 2009 that the Government would reverse the PPSMI policy, reverting to Bahasa Malaysia in national schools and Chinese and Tamil in vernacular schools.

He said more emphasis would be placed on English.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said last month that the Government was keeping its options open on Mathematics and Science being taught in both Bahasa Malaysia and English in schools.

On another matter, Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should exercise self-discipline once the Internal Security Act (ISA) had been scrapped.

"I hope Malaysians are mature enough to understand that," he said. "You must discipline yourself and not undermine the country's security."

Dr Mahathir hoped that the people would appreciate the freedom following the reforms.

However, he said the security laws replacing it should have judicial safeguards to ensure that the ruling government did not abuse the preventive detention provisions.