

**DAP pushes for optional PPSMI**  
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**By Debra Chong**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 30 — The Education Ministry must be more flexible and give students the option to learn maths and science in English, the DAP urged today, saying such a policy can help the country retain its best talents.

The party threw its weight today behind a pro-English group in the tug-of-war over Putrajaya's decision to abandon the 10-year-old policy of teaching science and maths in English at national schools — better known by its Malay abbreviation, PPSMI.

The growing row over the education policy has split the country along racial, political lines ahead of national polls likely to be called early next year.

Vocal fundamental groups are using the issue to champion their version of nationalism.

Several non-partisan civil societies have recently banded together to counter this tide but the powerful Malay-dominant political parties appear to be reluctant to commit to this hot potato issue ahead of the 13th general election.

Muhyiddin said letting parents freely pick between English and Bahasa Malaysia would cause chaos. — File pic

"The important principle that the Ministry of Education (MoE) must adopt is that advanced students should not be held back because of students who lagged behind academically," DAP publicity chief Tony Pua said today in a statement.

"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 Petaling Jaya Utara MP said.

He was replying to Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's insistence yesterday to replace PPSMI with a new policy designed to raise the position of Bahasa Malaysia, to be implemented in January next year with the start of the new school term.

Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, said yesterday the education system will turn chaotic if parents were allowed to freely choose the medium of instruction for their children.

Pua also rejected as a poor excuse Muhyiddin's explanation that the government lacked capable English language teachers.

He urged the government to review its decision to do away with the PPSMI altogether, saying the move was the same as "throwing out the baby with the bathwater".

"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," he said.

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/dap-pushes-for-optional-pps-mi/>