

Pro-BM group wants PPSMI scrapped immediately
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By Melissa Chi

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 6 — PPSMI (the teaching and learning of mathematics and science in English) remains abolished but a Bahasa Malaysia lobby group here is demanding Putrajaya discontinue the policy immediately instead of gradually phasing it out.

Gerakan Mansuhkan PPSMI (GMP) insisted that the government's continuance would indicate it is "not serious" with its plan to revert to using Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction for the two subjects.

Its chairman Prof Dr Shaharir Mohd Zain pointed out that under Putrajaya's decision on Friday, PPSMI would only be completely phased out in nine years, during which time the government could still change its mind.

Muhyiddin announced on Friday that while PPSMI remains abolished, the government would allow those already studying under the programme to continue until they have completed their secondary school education. — file pic

"The government should follow the same strategy of implementing PPSMI ... otherwise it will send many wrong signals and indicate it is not serious or fully committed.

"I think it is unfortunate that he (Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin) is doing something different from what most people expected him to do," the senior research fellow at Universiti Malaya (UM) told The Malaysian Insider.

He said it would take too long for the teaching and learning of science and mathematics in Bahasa Malaysia to be fully implemented and urged the government to make the switch immediately.

Muhyiddin, who is also the deputy prime minister, announced on Friday that while PPSMI remains abolished, the government would allow those already studying under the programme to continue until they have completed their secondary school education.

Stressing that this does not mean the administration was backpeddling on its 2009 decision to scrap the policy, Muhyiddin had reasoned that the move would bring "relief" to many parents who have been lobbying for PPSMI.

He explained the decision meant that students between Year Three and Form Five next year would be allowed the option of learning science and mathematics in Bahasa Malaysia, English or both languages, as allowed under PPSMI, until they complete their primary and secondary education.

But 2011's Year One students, the first batch to undergo MBMMBI (Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening Command of English), would have to continue learning the two subjects in Bahasa Malaysia when they enter Year Two next year, he said.

Prior to the announcement, Muhyiddin had appeared bent on pressing ahead with the government's original decision to scrap PPSMI completely next year.

Shaharir pointed out that when PPSMI was introduced in 2003, it was implemented for Year One, Form One, and Lower Form Six students simultaneously, saying that it is only fair to reintroduce MBMMBI in the same stages.

"The implication is so great when they try to do this very gradually ... it will be 2021 before PPSMI is abolished completely.

"In nine years, anything can happen; they might even decide to continue teaching in English. This is poor implementation of policy," the former Math professor at UKM said.

MBMMBI was mooted in July 2009 to replace PPSMI and came into effect in January this year for Year One students.

"It is a setback. We're hoping the government will not allow the abolishment of PPSMI in stages," Shaharir said.

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