

**Muhyiddin Suggests UKM To Lead In Uplifting Malay Language**  
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BANGI, Sept 23 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin today suggested that Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) becomes the lead university in efforts to uplift Malay as a language of knowledge.

He said the move would be in line with the objective of the setting up of the university and to get the effort going, he proposed that UKM took merit into consideration for promotion, especially for its academic staff who produced work in Malay.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, however, said, the move would require continuous effort at all levels in the country's education system and process.

"At the school level, we implement the national education system where Malay is the main medium.

"In fact, international organisations like UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) recognise that the mother tongue is the best language to be used as the language medium for students during their early stage of learning," he said when addressing some 2,000 UKM staff and students here.

Muhyiddin said UKM, established on May 18, 1970, was the first university in the country to use Malay as its medium of instruction in all academic fields.

In a related development, he ticked off some academicians who preferred to produce their work in English so that they could be published in international journals, in the belief that it would provide them a better chance for promotion.

He said the situation, if allowed to continue, would result in Malay to be only a language for conversation at home.

"I'm not anti-English, only that I want to clarify that the position of the Malay language should be maintained in the national education system so that we will not lose our national identity in pursuit of worldly progress.

"My statement is related to the government's decision to abolish the teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics in English, and now in the process of introducing the policy on uplifting the Malay language and strengthening English (MBMMBI).

"I believe UKM is the first university which actually implemented the policy on MBMMBI," he added.

Also present at the function were Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin and UKM vice-chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hassan Shahabudin.

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