

**No 'Flip-Flop' In PPSMI Issue - Muhyiddin
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MUAR, Nov 5 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has defended the government's action concerning the policy on the Teaching and Learning of Science and Mathematics in English, or PPSMI, stressing that there was no "flip-flop" on the matter.

Muhyiddin who is Education Minister said the decision to scrap the policy was made after a careful study.

"All members of parliament, including those from the opposition, supported when we decided to implement the Upholding Bahasa Malaysia, Strengthening the Command of English policy, or MBMMBI, which replaces the PPSMI," he told reporters after handing over sacrificial cows in conjunction with the Aidiladha at Sri Pekembar Hall, here today.

He said that a study by the ministry showed that only between five to seven per cent of schools under the ministry were using English when the PPSMI policy was in force from 2003 while the rest either used mixed language or Bahasa Malaysia in full.

The Cabinet yesterday agreed to allow all PPSMI cohort to continue learning the subjects in English until Form Five.

On the call by opposition leaders, urging the government to reduce the number of civil servants, Muhyiddin said the opposition should first take up the challenge to reduce the number of civil servants in the states under their rule.

"Now we know that if the opposition takes over the country, they will retrench many civil servants," he said, adding that for a start, Pakatan could take up the challenge to reduce the number in Penang and Selangor.

He said that civil servants, numbering about one million, were needed to ensure smooth delivery of government service.

He noted that although the government wanted a lean civil service, it should be acknowledged that civil servants played important role in ensuring growth in the economy.

"They contribute a lot to the country, and those who serve in an excellent manner should be rewarded accordingly," the deputy prime minister said.

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