

**English Plays Significant Role In Nation Building: Muhyiddin
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CYBERJAYA, April 30 (Bernama) -- Efforts to ensure Malaysians are able to master English remain a priority of the government, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said, stressing that the language has played a significant role in nation building.

"It is also unique in the sense that it is a language that is 'owned' by no one, but used by all.

"As such the government recognised its role as second only to Bahasa Malaysia and therefore efforts to ensure Malaysian are able to master the language remains a priority," he said in his speech when launching the Kirkby International College (KIC), and a coffee-table book titled "Kirkby College - A Heritage" here today.

Muhyiddin also said that Malaysia was currently "at a developmental crossroad" where the pace of globalisation dictates the need in seeking novel, innovative and less conventional ways to deliver education.

He said to acquire the latest advances in all fields, proficiency in the language in which knowledge was transmitted would be critical.

Muhyiddin said a key lever towards achieving this was to have well-rounded, top quality English teachers, who are not only able to articulate and teach the language, but also endowed with skills necessary to manage the complexities of nurturing human capital for the 21st century.

"This includes not only attaining language proficiency, but also acquiring soft skills such as leadership and problem solving ability," he said, adding that lack of proficiency in English would bring about major implications to the country's competitiveness over the long term.

Muhyiddin said in this regard, the establishment of KIC aligns well with the government's effort to ensure students receive quality education on par with internationally-recognised standards.

He added that the existence of private institutions of higher learning which were set up through private funding, complemented the public institutions of higher learning funded by the government, and opened up more options in the country's tertiary education sector.

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