

Muhyiddin: PPPM Is An Educational Matter, Not Political
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LONDON, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- The decision to increase the duration for the teaching of Bahasa Malaysia (BM) from 180 minutes to 240 minutes per week in vernacular schools nationwide was made after a comprehensive and in-depth study had been carried out.

Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the ministry had also held discussions and received feedback from many stakeholders involved in the matter.

He said the decision was more an educational agenda drawn up by the experts responsible and had nothing to do with politics.

Muhyiddin, who is also the Education Minister, said the move was made as the ministry did not want to see students in the vernacular schools following the BM subject at a much lower level compared to students in the other schools.

"The Ministry does not want to make any decision indiscriminately merely for the sake of enforcing it. This is an educational matter, not political. I am not an expert in teaching, not a minister who makes a conclusion on the most suitable duration for the session, but the teaching experts were the ones who came to this conclusion," he said at a media conference after attending a Merdeka Forum at a hotel, here Thursday.

Among the resolutions of the Malaysia Education Blueprint (PPPM) 2013-2025 launched recently, which had been questioned by several groups in cyber space, was the move to raise the number of hours for the teaching of BM in National Type Chinese and Tamil (Vernacular) Schools from 180 minutes per week to 240 minutes.

Referring to the statement by the Malaysian United Chinese School Committees Association (Dong Zong) which still criticised the PPPM, Muhyiddin said the association would continue to criticise, and he declined to comment further as he said there must be a certain limit in responding to the questions raised by the association.

He said much information in the form of short messages (SMS) had been received on the PPPM since it was launched a week ago, as much as 55,000 SMS which generally wanted to see excellent results in the national education system.

He said there were also opinions that wanted continuous engagement with the Education Ministry to seek the latest information on the development of the blueprint.

Muhyiddin said this was not a problem because in the implementation of such a massive plan, the ministry certainly could not act alone, in fact, in many cases the ministry needed to communicate with the community.

"...but we ask that there must be a form of understanding from Malaysians, so that they give an opportunity to the ministry after launching the PPPM, to explain in more detail on the blueprint according to the phases specified," he said.

Muhyiddin had earlier attended the 'Merdeka Forum 2013 56 years of Merdeka, Road to 2020' organised by the Malaysia High Commission in the United Kingdom.

About 300 people had heard the opinions of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) chief executive officer Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, and President of the Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah (Yadim) Prof Madya Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki, who were members of the panel, who talked on history, current affairs and the future of the nation.

Muhyiddin also gave a lecture besides responding to numerous questions raised at the forum, which mostly touched on the spirit of patriotism.

The forum was the last agenda in the itinerary of Muhyiddin's five-day working visit to the UK, and he was scheduled to return home late Thursday night.

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