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English subject periods to increase by 70%

THE time allotted to the teaching and learning of English in schools will be increased by 70% starting 2012 in the efforts to strengthen the command of the language among students, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (*picture*) said last Saturday. He said that at the moment, the time allotted to the subject could only be increased by a maximum of 14%. Muhyiddin, who is Education Minister, said the increase in the number of hours would allow for the introduction of new elements in the teaching and learning of English such as English literature and more emphasis on grammar. The ministry would also appoint more skilled teachers, review the types of textbooks used and set up English laboratories, he told reporters. "We want to make English as a main subject along with the Malay language," he said. He also said that the government would task the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka and the Malaysian National Institute of Translation to translate science, technology and mathematics terminologies into the Malay language. Asked on an online poll which saw some 80% pollsters voting against the government's decision to revert the teaching and learning of English to the Malay language, Muhyiddin said the decision was final and that it was done after a nationwide survey. — *Bernama*

