

**Where's the RM1mil for hardcore poor, asks CM**  
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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has questioned Umno over a RM1.1 million allocation by the Rural and Regional Development Ministry for 22 hardcore poor families in the state.

NONELim (left), who is DAP secretary-general, asked if each family had received the RM50,000 and where the money had gone.

He added that Penang Umno liaison chief Zainal Abidin Osman has yet to explain the whereabouts of the money.

"After three years, we want to ensure that the cash reaches the hands of the poor families but it is regretted that up till now, Zainal is unable to tell us where the money has gone and into whose hands," said Lim in a statement.

"Why is it that only 22 families are being given this RM50,000 each and not other hardcore poor families?" he asked.

Datuk Zainal Abidin Osman, penang umno chiefLim then threw a challenge at Zainal (right) to list down the 22 families, asking if the money had gone into "the pockets of certain quarters".

Lim was referring to Zainal's remark in 2009 that the ministry, to which he is adviser, was willing to take over the problems of the state's hardcore poor.

He said this when referring to the state government's "failure" under Lim to eradicate hardcore poverty in Penang.

He added that the ministry will be handing out financial aid to the 22 families under the People's Well-being Development Scheme (Skim Pembangunan Kesejahteraan Rakyat).

Lim said state executive councillor Phee Boon Poh had written to Zainal in April 2009 to obtain information about the 22 families, but no reply had been forthcoming.

Phee had then lodged a police report in July of the same year asking the force to investigate the whereabouts of the RM1.1 million, he added.

Penang spent RM6 million on poor

Lim noted that from March 2009 to December last year, the Penang government had channeled out RM6.32 million to about 700 families every month.

This was in line with the Pakatan Rakyat's plan to abolish poverty by 2015.

"This has helped wipe out hardcore poverty in Penang, the first state which has managed to do this," Lim said.

"Currently, we have agreed to increase the amount of monthly income to a minimum of RM600 per family, meaning, we will top-up the income of those who receive less than the RM600," he added.