

'Gov't approved RM559mil projects without tender'
MalaysiaKini.com
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Putrajaya approved a project to construct several schools worth more than half a billion ringgit without going through open tender, according to Sarawak Report.

The project to construct 15 schools in Sarawak at a cost of RM559 million was granted directly to a company after a top local party leader gave his endorsement, the **report** says.

The company proposed the construction of the schools in a letter dated March 15, 2013, to Education Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and in an undated letter as well to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, who is also finance minister,

Prior to the proposal, the report says, the top Sarawak party leader, in a letter dated Feb 25, endorsed the company's proposed project on the premise that it will help BN in the 13th general election that took place on May 5 last year.

"I strongly believe that such development would provide a positive impact on the community towards the Barisan National government, as it (more schools) is a matter of concern to Malaysians and especially rural people in Sarawak for the coming 13th General Election.

"This will encourage the support of the local community towards Barisan National," reads the letter that was published by *Sarawak Report*.

Just a month after the proposal, the Prime Minister's Office issued a letter, dated April 19, 2013, to the company, giving approval to the project.

But, nothing has been built...

"It is hereby agreed that the proposal you undertake referred to under the above heading has been approved by the development committee subject to the terms, conditions and agreement in the pre-offer document..." reads the letter from the Prime Minister's Office.

Sarawak Report says that despite the apparent pre-election schools project, none of them appeared to have been constructed.

It further noted that Muhyiddin in February this year, almost a year after the half a billion ringgit approval, toured Sarawak and once again promised to build more schools.

"So, are BN perhaps planning on reviving the same set of school promises once again in advance of the state elections, in order to buy the same votes with the same promises all over again?" the report says.

Malaysiakini has tried to contact the company given the project, based on the number listed in its project proposal letterhead. The number turned out to be that of a different group.

"We don't have that company in our group and I don't know the director you mentioned," a company officer at the phone number listed said.

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