

**Muhyiddin says BR1M is not bribery**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**February 16 , 2012**

KUANTAN, Feb 16 — Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin rejected criticisms that the RM500 handout to lower-income families under the BR1M initiative was a bribe.

He said it was public money redirected to those in need regardless of their background and political ideology, Bernama Online reported.

He said during the 1 Malaysia People's Feast in the Pahang capital today that even PAS members are receiving the aid.

The BR1M programme gives out one-time handouts this year to all households with a combined income of RM3,000 and below. A general election is anticipated this year by most political observers.

Muhyiddin (picture) explained that the government under Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak did not take a loan to make the payments, but used its own funds.

He took the opportunity to restate that the government spent RM33 billion in subsidies for goods, to help people. He added up to RM12 billion was allocated for fuel alone, and the sugar subsidies allowed its price in Malaysia to be lower than Thailand — the world's 6th largest producer.

Muhyiddin said the government was determined to help Malaysians get good incomes while increasing productivity, and control inflation and government expenditure.

He said it is the Barisan Nasional's (BN) government's intervention which is keeping the cost of living from rising.

Muhyiddin also announced RM19.8 million development allocation for the area.

Projects earmarked are Beserah's Chengal Lempong mosque (RM4 million), Kampung Peramu's multipurpose hall (RM1 million), Beserah fishing village's drainage system upgrade (RM3.5 million) and rebuilding Beserah's stalls and fish market (RM6 million).

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