

**Muhyiddin Wants Private Sector To Cooperate With Government Set Up More Preschools**  
**Bernama**  
**Aug 8, 2012**

PUTRAJAYA, Aug 8 (Bernama) - Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin today called on the private sector to cooperate with the government in efforts to set up more preschools in the country.

He said efforts to widen access to education should not be left to the government alone and joint efforts between the private sector and the government should instead be enhanced at all levels from the preschool to the secondary level.

"The government will offer various forms of assistance to the private sector that are keen to cooperate by providing grant subsidy, aid for school fees and training to private preschool teachers.

"It is hoped that such efforts can boost the establishment of private preschools besides ensuring the delivery of quality education and fulfilling the aspirations of parents and the community," he said at a ceremony to give out launching grants to private preschools under the Education National Key Result Area (NKRA), here Wednesday.

Also present were Deputy Education Minister Datuk Wee Ka Siong, Director-General of Education Tan Sri Abd Ghafar Mahmud and Education Ministry Secretary-General Datuk Dr Rosli Mohamed.

At the function, Muhyiddin, who is also the Education Minister, handed over RM10,000 grants to 70 out of the 220 preschools that had qualified for the grant.

He said that in the implementation plan for the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) 2.0, the role of the private sector in providing preschool facilities would be given more focus while efforts would be intensified.

"We realise that there is no easy way or short cuts for success, especially if it involves the future of our children.

"The government will always help, but the parties responsible must always strive for self-development...consider the giving of the grant as a responsibility or trust to shape up the future of our children," he said.

For the past two years, Muhyiddin said the government had introduced the giving of launching grants in the form of funds as an incentive for the setting up of preschools by the private sector that fulfills the criteria stipulated.

"It is hoped that the launching grant can assist new operators of preschools to set up more such schools especially in the poor rural areas where the government finds it difficult to access.

Muhyiddin said preschool education had been made as one of the sub-NKRA in the field of education during the GTP 1.0 (2010-2012) and continued into GTP 2.0 (2013-2015) with improvements and emphasis on the aspect of quality besides widening access especially in areas which had yet to have preschool facilities.

"In the sub-NKRA, the main target is to raise the rate of preschool enrolment for children aged 4+ and 5+ from 69 per cent at the end of 2009 to 87 per cent by this year by focusing on the poor areas in the urban centres, rural and the interior areas.

"I also call upon the preschool operators especially the private preschools to cooperate by giving information on preschool student enrolment to the Education Ministry. This information is most important to obtain the actual status to be used in the development planning and expansion of preschools in future," he said.

Muhyiddin said currently, the Education Ministry, Community Development Department (Kemas), the National Unity and National Integration Department (JPNIN) as well as the private sector provided preschool education in the country.

Based on statistics, he said the Education Ministry provided 8,671 preschool classes, Kemas (10,966), JPNIN (1,731) while the number of registered private preschools was 7,591.

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