

**Insan Sukuk Could Lift Education Quality, Says DPM  
Bernama  
May 18, 2015**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 18 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has described Khazanah Nasional Bhd's (Khazanah) sustainable and responsible investment sukuk (SRI Sukuk) launched today via special vehicle Ihsan Sukuk Bhd as a new instrument that could help raise the quality of the nation's education system.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said proceeds of the first tranche of RM100 million will be used to finance the needs of schools under Yayasan AMIR's Trust Schools Programme.

He said the foundation, a non-profit organisation initiated by Khazanah in 2010, focuses on improving access to quality education in government schools through its trust schools programme, a public-private partnership with the Education Ministry.

At the end of last year, the programme had a total of 30 schools in Kuala Lumpur, Johor and Sarawak, benefiting more than 20,000 students nationwide.

"The total is expected to rise to 50 schools by the end of this year," he said, while expressing hope the scheme could be expanded to more schools nationwide.

He made the remarks in his speech when launching the SRI Sukuk here today at a ceremony attended by Khazanah Managing Director Tan Sri Azman Mokhtar, Yayasan AMIR Chairman Tan Sri Arshad Raja Tun Uda and Education Ministry Secretary General Tan Sri Dr Madinah Mohamad.

"This is a huge challenge in terms of human resources, costs and logistics, but I am confident such sukuk issuances could be part of efforts to expand the programme," he said, adding the efforts could also help raise the nation's education quality and boost its status as a regional Islamic finance hub.

He said transformation of the education system and development of quality human resources are part of the efforts to make Malaysia a developed nation by 2020.

"We very much welcome the private sector's involvement in helping the government's efforts to develop the country's education sector," he said, adding the SRI Sukuk is a new funding method for the purpose of education and an opportunity for the private sector to give back to society.

The SRI Sukuk, the first of its type in the world, will be issued from Ihsan's RM1.0 billion Sukuk Programme.

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