

**Najib Hands Over Contributions Totalling RM25 Million To Assist 553 Religious Schools**  
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PUTRAJAYA, July 8 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak Wednesday handed over financial contributions totalling RM25 million to assist 553 Sekolah Agama Rakyat (SAR) Islamic religious schools throughout the country.

Among others, the assistance is to help the schools improve on management and economic standards so as to benefit the 90,000-odd students enrolled in them.

The contributions were handed over at a breaking of the fast event with the Prime Minister which was attended by representatives of the schools at Institut Pendidikan Guru (IPG) Kampus Pendidikan Islam in Bandar Baru Bangi, near here.

Also present was Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also Education Minister, and his wife Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman.

In his speech, Najib praised Muhyiddin for continuing various initiatives that he (Najib) had taken when he was Education Minister especially those related to the welfare of teachers.

"What I'm proud of is that there is continuity in the struggle to develop the education sector between me and Tan Sri Muhyiddin.

"Some initiatives, which I have started, are being continued by Tan Sri Muhyiddin and indeed have lifted this field to a higher level," he said.

The prime minister said he paid attention to teachers' welfare and Muhyiddin had improved it by raising the initial grade for graduates from teacher's training institutions from Grade 32 to 41.

Najib said the improvement in admission terms, promotion, and time based promotion had resulted in more than 60,000 teaching applications each year.

He said a teacher-to-be must have passion or desire other than assisted by good training and curriculum.

The prime minister said such spirit would ensure that every teacher was ready to teach anywhere, including in rural areas.

"The responsibility as teachers is very heavy because you are the catalyst of future progress of our beloved country," he said.

Najib also pointed out that the ministry received the highest allocation but it must be seen in a broader aspect, such as to produce quality human capital.

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin also handed over Aidilfitri goodies from Kumpulan Wang Amanah Pelajar Miskin (KWAPM) to 80 students from seven primary schools.

Najib, Muhyiddin and the guests then performed Maghrib, Isyak and Tarawih prayers.

Also present were Second Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh and Deputy Education Minister P. Kamalanathan.

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