

**Tenang Orang Asli's education cared for  
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About four years ago, SK Segamat Kecil, established in 1963, was seriously damaged by the big flood which hit almost the whole of Johor.

As a result, the pupils comprising Orang Asli children from the Jakun tribe, had to study under deplorable conditions.

However, the government not only repaired the damage, but also built new buildings for the school and equipped them with modern educational facilities.

Johor education director Markom Giran who visited the school today, said the government had spent RM7.3 million on building and equipping the two new blocks of school buildings which were ready in September last year.

"This project shows the government's concern for the plight and future of the Orang Asli community in this country," he said, adding that it was also aimed at narrowing the rural-urban school divide, as spelt out in the Education Development Blueprint.

The school, which has 65 pupils and 13 teachers, is located in the Segamat Kecil Orang Asli settlement, a hilly area in the Tenang state constituency. It has about 500 residents and is over 34km from Labis town.

The Tenang by-election will be held on Jan 30 following the death of its incumbent assemblyperson Sulaiman Taha last month. The nomination of candidates for the by-election is on Jan 22.

SK Segamat Kecil Parent-Teacher Association chairperson, Mamat Mohd Yasin, said the residents were grateful for the government's assistance to the school.

"We hope the teachers can guide our children to a better education and brighter future. There's nothing that parents want except their children's educational success," he said.

The school headmistress Kuldip Kaur said although the Orang Asli pupils still lagged behind academically, they were disciplined in attending school.

Only one pupil was absent today, the first day of the new school term.

"But I believe with the various facilities available such as the library, computer lab and more, the pupils' academic performance will improve," said Kuldip Kaur, who is from Batu Pahat.

- Bernama

