

**Gerakan: Don't forget the Orang Asli in land meeting**  
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The government should ensure the most important stakeholder in the issue of Orang Asli land ownership - the Orang Asli themselves - are consulted for their views, aspirations and cultural concerns in the upcoming meeting with menteri besar and chief ministers.

kampung orang asli sungai tesong 120208 houses  
In a press release, Gerakan's central bureau on unity chief Asharuddin Ahmad said this is in order to reach a fair and pragmatic policy formulation that would help the Orang Asli and resolve the land problems that have long plagued the community.

Asharuddin was commenting on a statement by Rural and Regional Development Minister Mohd Shafie Apdal yesterday that a meeting would be held soon on Orang Asli land problems with the heads of state governments, the conclusions of which would be presented to the National Land Council.

shafie apdal and mps no defection pc 280808 04  
Orang Asli land ownership have been included in the Tenth Malaysia Plan and will be aimed at transforming them into active farmers.

Shafie (right) said matters to be discussed in the meeting include designated areas and size as land was under jurisdiction of the respective states.

Urging the government to involve the Orang Asli in its deliberations, Asharuddin said a consultative and inclusive approach should be adopted to resolve the Orang Asli land ownership issue between the rural and regional development ministry and menteri besar and chief ministers.

While the government had so far failed to develop the Orang Asli given the number of indigenous peoples still lagging behind, Asharuddin said the government's stated target of bringing 3,410 out of 13,642 Orang Asli households out of poverty by 2015 was achievable if everyone involved was sincere and committed.

This applies also to the government's zero-poverty target set for the community by 2020, said Asharuddin.

He also reiterated Gerakan's stand that efforts to amend the Aboriginal Peoples Act (Act 153) to limit compensation and size of land ownership should involve all parties concerned so as to reach consensus on the better way forward for Orang Asli community.

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