

PM expected to visit Penan settlements
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The prime minister is expected to visit the Penan community in the Ulu Baram area in the Miri Division on July 22, Sarawak Deputy Chief Minister Alfred Jabu Numpang said today.

Najib Abdul Razak was expected to make a full-day working visit to four Penan settlements, he added.

"We are still working out the details of the programme. I will personally visit those areas this weekend," he told a news conference after officiating at the third graduation ceremony of the Mukah Polytechnic in Mukah.

Sarawak has about 16,000 Penan, with the majority of them in the Ulu Baram area and in Ulu Belaga in the Kapit Division.

Jabu said only 37 per cent of the Penan were still nomadic and had little or no education, making them easy prey for exploitation and instigation by irresponsible foreign non-governmental organisations working closely with some of their local counterparts to discredit the government.

Jabu said Najib's interest in meeting the Penan showed that he was a prime minister for all Malaysians.

"He is showing them that despite their small number in the country, the government remembers and cares for them," he said.

Earlier, in his speech at the function, Jabu stressed on the importance of polytechnics in producing more skilled workers to help with the government development programmes in the state.

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