

# Drive to help Penang Malays: Details soon

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PENANG: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is expected to announce several initiatives to help the Malays here soon.

Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop said the authorities were working on several proposals.

Penang Umno Youth as well as several Umno politicians had criticised the state government, in particular Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, for neglecting the Malays.

They said the community had been left out of mainstream development.

Koh and fellow Gerakan politicians have denied the charges.

Abdullah said the problems faced by the Malays on the island were serious and needed to be addressed.

"We do not want any community or

group to be left out of mainstream development," Nor Mohamed said yesterday after giving out Hari Raya aid and breaking of fast at Masjid Abdul Kader here.

Nor Mohamed, who met members of the Bagan Umno division earlier in the day, said one issue which disturbed him was housing.

"Most housing projects in the George Town city centre are way beyond the reach of the Malays," he said.

"This resulted in the community living in uncomfortable flats and their children left with no choice but to move out.

"This contributed to various social problems, in particular, drug addiction among the young."

He also announced that work on the 24km Second Penang Bridge, linking Batu Kawan on the mainland and Batu Maung on the island, would begin next month.