

Upgrade for new villages

Housing, education plan for the poor

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ARAU: The Housing and Local Government Ministry is looking into ways to further improve conditions in villages under the jurisdiction of local authorities.

Minister Datuk Seri Gng Ka Ting said the effort was part of the New Village Development Master Plan to ensure that these villages were not left behind in development.

He said the plan was to eradicate poverty in urban villages by finding ways to increase the income of their residents and

focussing on education and housing for the poor.

"I have told all local authorities to monitor and provide feedback on villages that need amenities and basic facilities," Ong told reporters after visiting Kampung Baru Pauh Setia near here yesterday.

"We don't want to see simple infrastructure like roads and drains not available in certain villages.

"The ministry will also work with other agencies. For example, if there is need for medical facilities, we will seek the cooperation of the

Health Ministry."

Among those who accompanied him were Pedis MCA chairman Ooi Ah Lan, Titi Tinggi assemblyman Datuk Loh Yoon Foo and MCA Central Committee member Tan Cheng Liang.

Ong said this was one of his many visits to new, traditional and organised villages (Kampung Tersusun) to see the basic conditions and facilities that needed improvement.

A total of RM97,500 was allocated for the village by the ministry for a road project and the construction of a roof over a basketball court there.

Asked if the Government planned to send firefighters to help put out the fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan, Ong said this depended on a request from the

Indonesian Government.

Ong later launched the Perlis MCA Crisis Relief Squad in Kangar which is headed by state MCA secretary Dr Por

Choo Chor.

He said all states already have such squads which were on standby to help out in the event of disasters.