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# PM: Knowledge key to civilisation

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**ALOR STAR:** Knowledge is the key to civilisation and should be sought wherever it can be found, including the humble pondok or rural religious school, the prime minister said.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the government would continue to encourage learning.

"Regardless of the system, whether it is the pondok, boarding or day school, it would not be a hindrance for the people to learn and equip themselves with useful knowledge.

"Now, it is a must for the people to be educated as without knowledge we will be left behind," Abdullah said at the handing over of a new building to Pondok Haji Ahmad in Kampung Kepala Bukit, Bukit Pinang, here yesterday.

Also present were the prime minister's wife Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid.

Abdullah said the government was serious in providing education, as proven by the large allocation in the 2008 Budget.

For example, Abdullah said, as

much as RM250,000 was spent for the training of a medical student.

Abdullah said gaining knowledge was not about being proud or showing off.

"Knowledge is the essence of a successful and happy life. People with knowledge would contribute to the country's economy and the stability of the political environment as well as the improvement of technology."

Abdullah said education was just as important for women. He said it would be a waste if women

could not contribute to the development of the country.

"With knowledge, we would lead a happy life, improve our standard of living and continue to be an independent nation," he said.

Abdullah later handed over the key to the new building to Ahmad Zubaidi Ismail, principal of Pondok Haji Ahmad which was destroyed by fire two years ago.

The new building, which cost RM400,000, took a year to be completed after construction started in September 2006