

Newspaper	New Straits Times
Date	6 February 2016

Quality education will uplift all communities, says Najib

NST-6/2/2016

LUNAS: The government will continue to uplift people of all races via an all-encompassing education policy, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

He said the government had lifted communities out of poverty and boosted the livelihoods of the low-income group through education policies.

He said during the administration of his father, the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, people of all races were well taken care of, particularly the poor.

"As a government, we must be fair to all races. It is a must. The government will do everything to uplift people, from various communities, from the clutches of poverty.

"This is why we give our children free and quality education so that they can develop themselves and improve their families' lives," he said when opening SJK (T) Ko Sarangapani here yesterday.

The RM13 million school, the 524th Tamil school in the country, received a special allocation approved by Najib.

Present were Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah, Education Minister Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid and Health Minister and MIC president Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam.

Najib said education guaranteed people's wellbeing in the long run, adding that cash aid provided only temporary relief. He said attempts to tackle poverty via education were exemplified in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025), which had yielded good results.

Najib said Malaysians must improve in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects as students' performance quality was low.

He said STEM was one of the thrusts of an advanced economy.

Using SJK (T) Ko Sarangapani as an example, he said the school would develop the Indian community.

"Our strategies will be expanded to help them. My message to the Indian community is, when we make a promise, we fulfil it. It is not an empty promise.

"We have a plan for the country, for the Indian community, and the plan is working. As you can see, we have delivered."

He said many Indians benefited from affirmative-action strategies implemented by the government.

Najib said the government had increased funding for Tamil schools with RM800 million spent since he took over as prime minister.

Dr Subramaniam said Najib had accorded priority to the Indian community's educational needs with six new Tamil schools to be built this year.

"Najib has been instrumental, as he was the first to form a Special Indian Agenda Committee, and brought major transformation to the community.

"The results have been astounding. We now have 524 Tamil schools, and another six schools in the pipeline," Dr Subramaniam told a crowd of 1,000 at the school here yesterday.

Najib later officially opened the school with Mahdzir and other senior government officers.