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Wealth and education among MIB's main aims

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PETALING JAYA: Doubling the income of poor Indian families, keeping 7% of places in public tertiary institutions and the civil service, and providing jobs form the crux of the 10-year Malaysian Indian Blueprint (MIB).

The most significant government programme yet in aid of the country's third largest ethnic group, the MIB will be funded by a slew of resources and allocations.

A highlight is a RM500mil unit trust seed fund to be set up by Permodalan Nasional Bhd.

The MIB has three broad aims – to improve income and wealth levels with emphasis on the bottom 40% Indian households (IB40); improve educational attainment; and create an increased sense of inclusion for the community.

There are about 1.99 million Malaysian Indians, who make up 7% of the country's 31 million population.

About 22,700 Indian households earn below RM1,000 a month, with poor education cited as the main reason for low income levels.

Half of the 868,800 Indians employed hold low-income jobs, such as service and sales workers, plant or machine operators and production staff.

Unemployment in the community is also comparatively high at 4% for males, compared with the national average of 2.9%.

The key targets of the MIB are:
> Doubling the average monthly income of poor Malaysian Indian households from the current national Poverty Line Income of RM950.

> Increasing the proportion of Malaysian Indians in civil service to

at least 7% at all grade levels within 10 years.

> Setting aside at least 7% of places in public tertiary institutions for Indians.

> Ensuring a 30% increase in enrolment and graduation from tertiary institutions among IB40 youths within 10 years.

> Resolving legal issues of an estimated 25,000 undocumented/stateless Indians in the country, with priority given to children and youths, within five years.

The MIB states that while the overall level of household income for Indians is comparable with that of the other ethnic groups, income distribution was heavily concentrated among Indians in the top 20% and middle 40% income segments.

The Indians in these higher income segments earn a major chunk or about 83% of the ethnic group's total income, while the IB40 make do with just 17% of the pie.

A survey of IB40 households last year found that housing was the second highest need of the group.

The MIB stated that about 20% of Indians, many of them estate workers, had failed to register for work permits when they first came to Malaya.

The permits were the basis on which citizenships were later granted.

"An estimated 12,300 people of Indian ethnicity are currently stateless, while another 13,000 face documentation problems," the MIB said.

The MIB stated that most of the targets were to be fully achieved by 2026.

The Malaysian Indian Blueprint



CREATE RM500mil Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB) fund to grow the savings of the IB40 – mainly those living below the poverty line – in relevant PNB unit trust schemes.



ALLOCATE RM40mil to help needy Indian students further their studies at higher education institutions.



CREATE RM500mil revolving fund to meet the financing needs of Indian businesses.
REORGANISE and consolidate functions related to income, upliftment of the community into a single department.
ENROL companies and employers as upskilling and job placement partners



CREATE an outreach, screening, facilitation and monitoring programme to raise participation of capable Indian-owned companies in public procurement contracts to be managed by Finance Ministry, Khazanah Nasional Bhd, among others.



CREATE a Family Turnaround Programme where trained case workers work with families on areas such as school attendance, violence avoidance and productive employment.



CREATE an IB40 Educational Performance Initiative to track and improve the educational achievement of IB40 children and youth.



CREATE a Tamil School Development Advisory Board within the ambit of the streamlined Education Team of the MIB Implementation Unit.



CREATE a higher education financial support programme for IB40 students. Database profiling IB40 students needing comprehensive financial support to be formed.



CREATE a National Temple Database to track all Hindu temples, pre-empting issues that may arise.

