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Aid for orang asli in Budget

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PM: We want them to excel in education and develop further

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PEKAN: A one-off aid allocation will be announced at the next Budget for all orang asli students who have managed to enrol in public higher learning institutions.

Announcing this, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said this was to encourage the orang asli community to pursue higher education.

"We also want to encourage entrepreneurship among the orang asli and so, the Orang Asli Development Department (Jakoa) has received RM2mil for this purpose.

"I will also approve another RM1mil for the development of orang asli homestays to be managed by Jakoa and the Tourism and Culture Ministry," he said here yesterday.

Najib was speaking at a gathering with the orang asli community in Kampung Menchupu here yesterday. Budget 2018 will be tabled in Parliament on Oct 27.

The Government, said Najib, would do its best for the development of the orang asli community to ensure that they were not left behind but they, too, should play their part.

"But it takes two hands to clap. We do our best for the orang asli but you must also respond.

"Send your children to school so they are not left behind. Without education and knowledge, one can never advance.

"When we become an advanced nation, we want the orang asli to also be a part of it," he said.

Najib also said the survey of orang asli land was expected to be completed by the end of this month and this would be handed to the state governments for further action.

Earlier at the National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS) Fiesta in Kampung Baru Salong here, Najib said the close cooperation among Government agencies, departments and ministries had provided efficient service to the public.

"As the second branch of our national strategy, NBOS' purpose is to break down the barriers among the agencies, departments and ministries.

"Three important elements of NBOS are the high-impact effects on the community, fast delivery and savings in Government expenditure," Najib said.

He said one of the results of NBOS was the Urban Transformation Centre, which had been set up in 20 locations nationwide and served 51 million people, including repeat customers.

"Putting multiple services under one roof can save RM2bil in development expenditure," Najib said.

However, he said, this did not mean that the Government had run out of money.

"The Opposition has made baseless allegations to confuse and lie to the people. We have money and we are actually optimising our expenditure to provide the most efficient services to the public."