

## ASPIRASI KELUARGA MALAYSIA'

# Ismail Sabri: Govt to eradicate Sabah's development gap

**KOTA KINABALU:** The federal government is making efforts to eradicate the development gap between Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah, including through the construction of the Pan Borneo Highway, said Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

The prime minister said the toll-free Pan Borneo Highway being built in Sabah has the potential to transform all areas in the state within the next five years.

"The government is also investing in education by repairing and rebuilding all dilapidated schools in rural Sabah. I was told that the federal Education Ministry has entrusted 113 dilapidated schools in Sabah to the Public Works Department of Malaysia and Sabah as the implementing agencies to upgrade these schools at a cost of RM1.02 billion.

"It is the hope of the federal government to see Sabah and Sarawak enjoying rapid development similar to that in other states," he said when launching the Sabah-level "Aspirasi Keluarga Malaysia" tour at the Sabah International Convention Centre here yesterday.

Also present were Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor,

Deputy Chief Ministers Datuk Seri Bung Moktar Radin, Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan and Datuk Dr Joachim Gunsalam, Agriculture and Food Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee, state Cabinet ministers and senior ministry officials.

The prime minister said the government would remain committed to realising the target of zero hardcore poverty in 10 localities in Sabah by the end of 2025 as outlined under the 12th Malaysia Plan.

He said the 10 localities identified for phase one are Tongod, Pitas, Kota Belud, Kota Marudu, Beluran, Nabawan, Tuaran, Sipitang, Beaufort and Ranau.

He said the poverty eradication programme was previously implemented in silos, but the roles of all agencies involved were now combined, with the Prime Minister's Department through the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) and the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) acting as the coordinator and facilitator.

"The government is holding an engagement session with the co-operation of the state government and district offices to obtain input from all parties.

"EPU and ICU will bring together



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob (centre) launching the 'Aspirasi Keluarga Malaysia' tour at the Sabah International Convention Centre in Kota Kinabalu yesterday. With him are Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor (second from left), Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali (left), Food Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee (second from right) and Sabah state secretary Datuk Seri Safar Untong. BERNAMA PIC

all parties involved to find the best method to eradicate hardcore poverty holistically based on locality."

Ismail Sabri said the federal government had always played its role in fulfilling all matters listed in the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63), especially those related to Keluarga Malaysia in Sabah.

In the spirit of Keluarga Malaysia, he said the government hoped that any outstanding issues or requests from Sabah could be considered in the best

way possible through the federal-level committee set up to discuss the state's demands on MA63.

On another matter, he said the Trilateral Cooperation Agreement between Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines would be reviewed to strengthen defence and security in Sabah waters.

He also said residents of Pagalungan in Nabawan no longer need to travel more than 100km to Keningau to get their border crossing pass, as it is now available at the Pagalungan Immigra-

tion Control Post in the district.

To ensure the "no wrong door policy", renewal of Long-Term Visit Passes and Temporary Working Visit Passes can now be done at all immigration offices in the state, he said.

On the issue of unreasonable increase in flight ticket prices during festive periods, he said discussions would be held with the parties involved so that Keluarga Malaysia would not face the same problems during the next festive season. **Bernama**