

Government Will Provide Additional Scholarships For Orang Asli Students, Says Najib
Bernama
September 24, 2011

SUNGAI SIPUT, Sept 24 (Bernama) -- The government will provide additional scholarships to enable more Orang Asli students pursue higher studies locally and abroad, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Najib said education was an important factor in efforts to raise the living standard of the community and that the government was willing to provide the necessary assistance.

"If there are more candidates, we will provide additional scholarships...it is not a problem. We want to produce more graduates among Orang Asli children," he said when launching a "Jalinan Murni" programme at the Orang Asli settlement in Kampung Bawong here Saturday.

Also present were Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal, Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar and former Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, who is also the former MP for Sungai Siput.

However, Najib said a mindset change was also needed from the community as assistance in the form of infrastructure and basic amenities alone was not enough to bring it to a higher plane of development.

"If we work hard and have perseverance, we can change our lives for the better. If we are not able to do this at least our children should be successful, this is what I am hoping for the Orang Asli community.

"I also hope the elders of the community would encourage their children to finish their schooling and not drop out early. The children should follow in the footsteps of other Orang Asli Children who have received scholarships to study in countries like the United Kingdom, Australia and local public universities," he said.

Touching on the "Jalinan Murni" programme for the Orang Asli community organised by Yayasan 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), Yayasan Felde and Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB), he said it showed the high commitment of the government to the 1Malaysia concept.

He said the concept was about enriching the lives of all Malaysians and that under it, no community would be left out of mainstream development.

At the function, which was attended by some 7,000 people, Najib also presented school uniforms and pocket money to 10 Orang Asli students, replica cheques to eight headmasters who represented Orang Asli pupils and food baskets to 10 heads of Orang Asli households.

After the function, Najib visited a 1Malaysia Mobile clinic and community services exhibition mounted by Yayasan Felde before joining the Orang Asli community to a feast.

He then left for the federal capital.

Meanwhile, Shafie said currently there were 26,268 Orang Asli enrolled in primary schools, 12,148 in secondary schools, 420 in vocational and skills institutes and 484 in public institutions of higher learning.

He said the government had also sent five Orang Asli students overseas for degree studies fully sponsored by MARA with two of them studying in the accountancy and engineering disciplines at the University of South of Australia, Adelaide.

---BERNAMA

Copyright © 2011 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=615593>