

**Najib Announces Aid To Help Fishermen Repair Houses**  
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KUANTAN, Jan 21 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak Saturday announced that fishermen throughout the country will be given aid between RM5,000 and RM10,000 to repair their houses.

Stressing that the Barisan Nasional (BN) government would continue to give priority to their welfare, Najib said the application forms for the aid were already in the process of being distributed through fishermen's associations.

"If you want to build a new house also can, but I hear fishermen can't sleep if they do not hear the sound of waves. Their houses must be by the sea, to move (to other areas) will be difficult. "So, part of the RM300 million allocation (for fishermen's housing) will be used to repair fishermen's houses throughout the country," Najib said when launching the national-level Ihsan Samudera programme aimed at helping fishermen, in Tanjung Lumpur here.

The prime minister was referring to the RM300 million Special Fund for Fishermen's Housing that he announced when tabling the 2012 Budget in the Dewan Rakyat in October last year.

The function, which was attended by some 20,000 people, mostly fishermen, also saw Najib presenting aid totalling RM1.5 million to three fishermen's associations based in Kuantan, Rompin and Pekan.

It was also attended by his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

In his speech, Najib said the government today was deeply concerned about the welfare of all levels of society and was willing to fight for their interests so as to see a big change in their lives and the next generation.

According to him, the 1Malaysia concept launched by the government was not mere sloganeering or political rhetoric but something that had been translated into a reality through sound policies and programmes in accordance to its underlying philosophy.

He highlighted social justice and the need to be fair and inclusive as bedrock principles in implementing the concept.

"We give aid according to what is fair based on their needs. Being inclusive means no segment of society will be sidelined by the government.

"Through this programme, the government has proven that this is not empty talk, not to please people, but we deliver through a programme that can better the lives of those who need it," he said.

The aid included 19-footer boats for 60 fishermen, 30hp outboard engines for another 60 fishermen, global positioning system (GPS) devices (450 fishermen), fishing nets (600), life jackets (1,200), bamboo fish traps (600) and construction of an artificial reef at a yet to be

identified location.

Najib also presented school aid in the form of uniforms and schooling materials worth RM100 a set to 3,000 pupils who are children of fishermen. Two hundred more pupils received a bicycle each.

He said he hoped all government policies, aid for fishermen and education for their children would be bring about a drastic improvement in their lives.

Taking Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, a fisherman's son who rose up to be Menteri Besar of Perak as an example, Najib said a person born in a fisherman's family need not necessarily end his life as a fisherman.

"Although the opposition like to make fun of Zambry because his skin is of a different colour, he should be praised and given an award because he has proven that through hard work, he could become successful in his life," Najib said.

At the function, the prime minister also announced another allocation of RM63 million to revive a housing project for fishermen in Kampung Bunut Rendang here which was abandoned since 15 years ago.

The Ihsan Samudera programme which is fully supported by the 1MDB and Felda foundations is a programme under the 1Malaysia concept that is focused on improving the lives of coastal and riverine fishermen throughout the country.

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