

Aid for Orang Asli students
New Straits Times
22 June, 2012
By M. HAMZAH JAMALUDDIN

NEW MEASURES: Seven initiatives to improve education

KUALA LIPIS: THE government has planned a paradigm shift under the Orang Asli Education Transformation Programme via seven initiatives to improve the performance of Orang Asli students.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the seven initiatives would cover various aspects, including improving the facilities, teaching standards and monitoring processes for Orang Asli students.

Muhyiddin said the first initiative was to improve the administration of schools with Orang Asli students while the second was to include basic vocational education elements at such schools.

The third was to reduce the dropout rate so that there will no such cases by 2018.

"The latest statistics shows that the dropout rate among Orang Asli students is at 30 per cent. This is alarming," said Muhyiddin when launching the transformation programme at Sekolah Kebangsaan Bertau, near here, yesterday.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, said the dropout rate would be reduced by six per cent every year starting from next year.

As for the fourth initiative, he said the Education Ministry had introduced a special programme to train more Orang Asli teachers at Tengku Ampuan Afzan Teacher Training Institute here and had created several student management assistant posts that would be filled by Orang Asli.

The government, Muhyiddin said, would also improve the education infrastructure for the community, including allocating RM32 million for the construction of four special schools -- which would have both primary and lower secondary facilities -- in Perak, Selangor, Johor and Pahang.

He said another RM12 million would be spent to upgrade four hostels for Orang Asli students in Gua Musang, Kuala Kangsar, Pekan and to build a new one here.

An allocation of RM5 million had also been set aside for transportation and RM10 million to upgrade the teachers' quarters in remote areas.

The sixth initiative, he said, was to strengthen the smart partnership with non-governmental organisations and government-linked companies, while the seventh initiative was to establish a special monitoring system to keep track of the performance of Orang Asli students.

"This will help audit the performance of Orang Asli students and their schools and allow us to improve on them from time to time," he said, adding that there are 28,071 Orang Asli students at present.

He said RM3.2 million from the RM500 million allocation to upgrade schools nationwide, which was announced by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak recently, would be used to repair Orang Asli schools.

Present was Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob.

Later, speaking at a gathering in Raub, Muhyiddin said Barisan Nasional had solved many problems and fulfilled all the promises made as its leaders had always listened to the people on the ground.

"Our turun padang approach has enabled us to understand what the people want and find ways to assist them.

"We are happy to meet the people on the ground without too much protocol or red carpet and kompong to welcome us," he said at the event, which was attended by more than 5,000 people.

Muhyiddin said BN needed the full support from the people as it wanted to implement various transformation programme.

Copyright © 2012 The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad.

Source: <http://www.nst.com.my/nation/general/aid-for-orang-asli-students-1.96974>