

**Don't Politicise Education - Najib
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TUMPAT, Jan 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said education was much too valuable to be politicised because it lay the foundation to turn out successful Malaysians who will chart out the nation's future.

He said whatever assumptions the opposition had on the government's education efforts, the government's aim was to produce a generation that was anchored in faith and high in knowledge.

"This is the concept the government has pursued in the field of education, some say it is the national system but its core is to produce Malaysians who are high in virtue and knowledgeable.

"How to be a Caliph (Islamic leader) if one lacks knowledge, if we only have faith but without the requisite knowledge, we are also not going to make much headway.

Thus the need for a balance between the two," he told a crowd of more than 5,000 people including 3,000 students gathered at Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) Sri Wakaf Baharu here Sunday.

The Prime Minister spend about an hour at the school meeting the local folk and also witnessed the handing over of the RM100 Early Schooling Aid to students of SK Sri Wakaf Baharu, SK Wakaf Baharu and Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Wakaf Baharu.

Also present were International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Awang Adek Hussin, Armed Forces chief Gen Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin and Tumpat Umno head Datuk Noor Zahidi Omar.

The prime minister said the government would in no way sideline Kelantan in education matters and pledged that the state would get the same treatment as other states despite it being ruled by the opposition for over 20 years now.

"I was very happy Kelantan emerged as the second best state when the Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) results were announced.

"Pahang (my state) also lost to Kelantan and I congratulate all those who contributed towards achieving the fine performance including the parents. That is why I say education should not be politicised because the future of our children depends on it," he said.

Najib said PAS's (PAS is in control of Kelantan) "Membangun Bersama Islam" (Develop With Islam) slogan would not get the people anywhere if pursuit of knowledge was not given priority by its leaders.

"Islam's greatness in the past was due to the greatness of its knowledge which had lighted up the world during that period. It was anchored on knowledge and much more," he said.

Najib also pointed out that Mustapa and Dr Awang Adek were born from poor families but became successful and were leaders in Kelantan.

"Tok Pa (Mustapa), his father was a farmer and religious teacher, but his son scored first class honours in university. Awang Adik's father was a tobacco planter but now he is a deputy minister," he said.

He said the federal government had allocated RM201 million to Kelantan for education in the state this year.

"I come to tell this to the people of Kelantan. We have a direction, we have a stand, we fight for what we hold on to, it is something that cannot be marginalised because of political differences," he added.

The prime minister then mingled with parents and students gathered there before proceeding to the Siti Khadijah Market in Kota Baharu for a walkabout. He then went to the Kelantan Rural Transformation Centre in Tunjong to open a "Promises Kept" programme and later in the afternoon will attend a closed-door meeting of the State Umno Liaison Committee at the Renaissance Hotel here before returning to the federal capital.

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