

Government Has Introduced Initiatives To Make Indians More Competitive, Says Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 12 (Bernama) -- The government has introduced several initiatives to make the Indian community more competitive, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Tuesday night.

The prime minister said the government was giving Indian students more opportunities in terms of enrolment in universities as well as 1,500 places in matriculation programmes.

"I launched a programme in Port Dickson last week to give more places for Indian students in polytechnics. These are Indians who otherwise would not be able to get a diploma and later a degree.

"We are also giving out micro credit, for example, for small business enterprises through Tekun (the National Entrepreneurial Group Economic Fund) and Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia," he said on the 'Conversation with the PM' programme aired over TV3.

Najib said the government recognised the contribution of members of the Indian community who had worked in estates in making Malaysia the world's number one rubber producer.

"For example, they worked in our railways, and in JKR (Public Works Department). So, they played their part in the development of Malaysia. We must recognise them.

"As you know, the estate community, the new generation, they want to leave the estates. Therefore, we have to have a kind of programme that will manage this urbanisation or the movement from the estates to the urban areas," he said.

Besides, he said, the government had also given more money for Tamil schools in ensuring that the achievement of Indian students would improve and they had better opportunities in future.

"We have increased the allocation for Indians in term of skills training. So, we have done many things, and these have been recognised by the Indian community.

"I use the Tamil word 'Nambikkai', which means having the confidence and trust, and if the Indian community gives us the confidence and trust I'm sure we can do even more for them," he said.

Najib said that with Malaysia's potential, the government could take the country to greater heights.

"I think about the future of Malaysia and the 'rakyat' (people) all the time and have put my heart and soul to the job.

"I have never worked so hard like I have done, and it's because I believe that we can do so much for Malaysia. That is why I'm seeking a strong mandate from the people," he added.

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