

RM50mil for Kar1sma
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IPOH: The RM50mil allocation under the 1Malaysia People's Welfare Programme (Kar1sma) will be disbursed by March 31, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said.

The Prime Minister said the programme would benefit some 200,000 people nationwide.

"Those in the peninsula will get a one-off voucher of RM200 while those in Sabah and Sarawak will get RM300.

"The vouchers can be used to redeem daily necessities, schooling needs, wheelchairs, kitchen and cooking appliances from selected shops," he said at the launch of the programme and Urban Transformation Centre here yesterday.

Najib said the programme was another initiative to ease the financial burden of those from the low-income bracket and underprivileged groups.

A mobile team consisting of representatives from government agencies and non-governmental organisations will move around the country to ensure that the aid reaches its target groups.

The team, he said, would include the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry, Domestic Trade, Co-operatives and Consumerism Ministry, Prime Minister's Office's Implementation and Coordination Unit (ICU) and Yayasan Kebajikan Malaysia.

On another matter, Najib said he envisioned Malaysia becoming a high-income nation with a low taxation rate.

"Over the years, we have managed to reduce tax and continue to generate revenue.

"This is a special achievement and it is our long-term trend based on our economic development model.

"We want to ensure our social safety net continues to be strengthened without turning Malaysia into a welfare state," he added.

Najib noted that Malaysia has one of the lowest taxation rates in the world.

He said the individual income tax for Malaysians was at about 25% and could continue to be lowered further depending on the country's capability to generate revenue.

In Seri Iskandar, Najib said the education loan for 13 *orang asli* students currently studying overseas were converted to scholarships.

He said the conversion of the Mara loans for the students would be in effect immediately, adding that this was to encourage other *orang asli* children to work hard and to become successful.

"I believe many *orang asli* children can be successful in their studies. Some are facing difficulty in getting an education. The Government will help them achieve their dreams," he said during a mammoth gathering here.

Najib said the Government always provided opportunities and space for the *orang asli* community.

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