

**Government Sets Aside RM18.1 Million For Orang Asli Educational Programmes**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 16 (Bernama) -- The government has set aside RM18.1 million to provide proper education for children of Orang Asli this year.

Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal said the allocation would be used for various educational aid programmes for the children, such as providing them transport and pocket money, as well as paying for their tuition fees.

"The academic achievements of Orang Asli children are improving, not only at primary level, but also at the SPM and STPM levels.

"I'm sure this success is not only due to government initiatives, but also the involvement of parents and students in striving for excellence," he told reporters after the Orang Asli Excellence Award 2014 presentation ceremony here Thursday.

"So far, a total of 700 Orang Asli children are pursuing their studies at institutions of higher learning, while 48,000 others are attending primary and secondary schools," he said.

At the same time, Mohd Shafie said the ministry was not marginalizing the Orang Asli youths who did not perform well in academic as they were encouraged to pursue vocational education.

"To date, 1,797 Orang Asli youths have been trained under the Skills Training and Career Programme, 984 of whom have been hired and now earning between RM900 to RM5,000 a month," he said.

At the ceremony, 128 Orang Asli students received the Excellence Award for their success in the Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR), Form 3 Assessment (PT-3), Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) for the year 2014.

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