

**Najib promises millions to develop infrastructure in rural Sarawak**  
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**By Desmond Davidson**

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak today announced an allocation of RM87 million to develop infrastructure in the Dayak heartland, as he moves to strengthen Barisan Nasional's support in Sarawak.

In his latest visit to the state, Najib said the allocation is for "the final connection" to link the last major town on Sungai Rajang, Kapit with Sibu by road.

He said he is committed to bring the Dayaks "to the forefront of national development".

"I like to see the Dayaks move forward," the prime minister said at the Sarawak Dayak National Union (SDNU) 59th anniversary dinner in Kuching tonight.

"We must not allow any ethnic community, big or small, to be marginalised or at worst neglected from being part of the mainstream of the nation," he said.

"Each community must be given the opportunity to reach the front of national development."

The prime minister said he is committed that the Dayaks would not be marginalised and to make them feel "they are part and parcel of this nation".

"This nation cannot be great if we are not one," he said at the dinner held at the Borneo Convention Centre.

Najib admitted that from what he had seen and gathered from many visits to these areas, Sarawak's rural areas are still lagging behind other parts of the country in terms of infrastructure.

He said that he had made more visits to the rural areas of the state than all the five previous prime ministers put together, adding that he wanted to feel the pulse of the people.

"I could stay in Putrajaya and get briefings from my officers. But it is nothing like going to the ground and meeting people," he said.

"When you meet the people, there are things you will discover.

He said he discovered the "missing link" of Kapit in one of the visits.

Najib also said that he would like to sort out other problems that had plagued the community, such as education, native customary lands, and modernising the longhouses.

He said Putrajaya would work with the state government on all these issues.

He said solving all the problems though would take time "as our resources are limited".

Najib's latest two-day working trip to Sarawak comes only 10 days after making a support gathering trip. – June 16, 2015.

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