

Najib Announces RM2.5 Million Allocation for Pondok Institution
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KUALA NERUS, May 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak Monday announced an allocation of RM2.5 million for the development of the pondok institution in the country.

He said RM500,000 would be given as immediate aid under the 'Tabung Kasih Perdana Menteri' to pondok affected by disaster, while the remaining RM2 million would be given as grant to the Malaysian Pondok Development Foundation (YPPM).

Najib said the allocation for the 'Tabung Kasih Perdana Menteri' would be added, when necessary.

"I approve the allocation of RM2 million in grant for YPPM to continue research on the pondok institution in the country, besides reviving the operation of YPPM's social media," he said when closing the 2nd 'Ijtimak Pondok' Conference at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) here.

Also present were Terengganu Menteri Besar Ahmad Razif Abd Rahman, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, YPPM executive chairman Datuk Dr Mashitah Ibrahim and UMT vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Nor Aieni Mokhtar.

He welcomed the move to strengthen the pondok institution through the 'wakaf' (endowment) system, regarding it as a good and reasonable approach to resolve financial problems facing the pondok institution.

He said the approach had long been practised by renowned institutions of higher learning in the world, like the Al-Azhar University in Egypt, as well as several universities in Western countries.

"Renowned universities like Harvard, Cambridge and Yale are among the best examples which use funds from wealthy individuals.

"Almost every Islamic city has universities, libraries and Islamic centres that are built from wakaf.

"I hope all these will inspire Muslims in the country to use the wakaf approach for various

purposes, including development of the pondok institution in future," he added.

Najib suggested that YPPM also take the initiative to register the pondok institution so that the foundation could benefit from the facilities and allocation provided by the government.

Earlier, Mashitah, in her speech, said YPPM was short of funds to help the pondok institution.

Based on records, there are more than 400 pondok institutions nationwide, but only 112 are registered with YPPM.

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