

**Budget 2017: Scholarships Allocation to Continue - PM Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 21 (Bernama) -- The government will continue to provide scholarships with an allocation of RM4.3 billion to various ministries and relevant agencies of higher learning next year.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said this when tabling the Budget 2017 entitled 'Ensuring Unity and Growth Economic Growth, Inclusive Prudent Shopping, Wellbeing of the Rakyat' at the Dewan Rakyat here today.

He said the scholarship will continue to be awarded through the Public Services Department (RM1.6 billion), Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA)(RM2 billion), Ministry of Higher Education (RM250 million), Ministry of Health (RM208 million), Ministry of Education (RM194 million), Ministry of Human Resources (RM28 million) and Ministry of Youth and Sports (RM21 million).

He said to ensure the quality of the higher education to be at par with the global standards, a sum of RM7.4 billion is allocated to 20 public universities next year.

Najib, who is also Finance Minister, said from this amount, a sum of RM 1.4 billion is allocated to four university hospitals, while RM300 million is allocated for empowerment of five research universities.

"In addition, a sum of RM100 million is allocated to higher education institutions to foster research culture as well as to increase publications and intellectual properties," he said.

Najib added to enhance effectiveness of assistance to students in institutions of higher learning, the government will replace book vouchers with student debit card worth RM250.

He said the card can be used to purchase books, computer accessories and internet access which will benefit 1.3 million students.

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