

## Sabah to spend RM35 million this year to uplift education standard

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The Sabah government has allocated RM35 million this year to implement three new education programmes and other initiatives. - BERNAMA Pic

KOTA KINABALU: The Sabah government has allocated RM35 million this year to implement three new education programmes and other initiatives.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor said the state government has introduced the Bantuan Aktiviti PIBG Sabah (Bagus), Bantuan Ihsan Sekolah Sabah (BISBAH) and the 2022 Sabah Education Excellence Award (AKSA) to be in line with Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS)-led state government's commitment to uplift the state's education standard.

He said since taking over the helm, the GRS state government has placed the education portfolio under the purview of the Special Tasks Minister's Office to give special attention to education affairs.

"This does not mean that the state government is taking over the federal's role and its responsibility in Sabah.

"Instead, the initiatives are to complement programmes implemented by the federal government in Sabah," he said in a speech at the presentation of Sabah's Bantuan Khas Tunai Peperiksaan (BAKTI) assistance and launch of BAGUS, BISBAH dan AKSA 2022 at Menara Kinabalu here today.

in his speech delivered by state Local Government and Housing Minister and Finance Minister II, Datuk Seri Masidi Manjun.

Hajiji said the state government is serious in ensuring children in Sabah get the best possible assistance and achieve academic excellence.

"This is in line with the second thrust of the Hala Tuju Sabah Maju Jaya development plan introduced by the GRS-led state government that empowers Sabah's human capital."

He said RM3 million has been set aside for BAGUS that will see each parent-teacher association in 1,500 schools receiving RM2,000 to carry out their respective activities this year.

For the BISBAH initiative, he said RM12 million has been allocated to assist 1,500 schools throughout the state in acquiring computers, printers, teaching aid equipment, desks and chairs.

The state government will also give special recognition to outstanding Sabah students who excel academically via the Sabah Education Excellence Award (AKSA), he said.

On top of this, the state government would continue with the other assistance given last year such as the Bantuan Ihsan Komputer (BAIK) programme; Bantuan Wang Pendaftaran IPT (BUDI); and BAKTI, said Hajiji who is state Finance Minister.

Last year, the state government approved RM15 million for the purchase of laptops under the BAIK programme to help 10,000 needy students especially those sitting for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM), Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM) and Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) in their online studies via the home-based learning and teaching (PdPR) process because classrooms were shut down due to the Covid-19 pandemic

The state government has spent RM10 million last year to help 5,000 students pay their registration fees under the BUDI initiative with those going for diploma studies getting RM1,500 and those pursuing degree courses receiving RM2,000.

Hajiji said the state government has also given RM200 each to 40,277 Sabah students who have registered to sit for the SPM, STAM and STPM last year under the BAKTI programme, which cost a total of RM8,055,400.

Since the three examinations have been postponed to March this year, the BAKTI 2021 assistance was handed to the State Education Department and Sabah Religious Affairs Department for distribution to recipients.

Besides that, the state government has set aside RM55 million in the Sabah 2022 budget as scholarships for students to pursue higher learning with priority given to students who take the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses to meet future market demands.

Hajiji said the state government would ensure all Sabah children have access to education, hence RM13.9 million has been allocated to help 289,204 students to buy school uniforms, shoes and stationaries under the School Social Assistance programme.

Present at the event were Sabah Special Tasks Minister Datuk Mohd Arifin Mohd.