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## Guarding Orang Asli's interest

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Perak govt gazettes 33,000ha of land for community's economic, social activities

THERE is more land gazetted in Perak for the Orang Asli compared to other states.

State rural development committee chairman Datuk Mohd Zolkafly Harun said 33,046ha of land had been gazetted for the development of economic and social activities of the Orang Asli in Perak.

"This is vital to ensure the preservation of their cultural heritage and identity.

"With proper recognition and protection, the Orang Asli can continue to live in better and prosperous conditions as well as contribute to the development of the state," he said in reply to Muhammad Zulfadli Zainal (PN-Slim) during the question-and-answer session of the Perak State Assembly sitting, at Bangunan Perak Ridzuan in Ipoh, yesterday.

Mohd Zolkafly said there were 257 Orang Asli villages in Perak recognised by the Orang



The state has allocated over 33,000ha of land to empower Orang Asli communities.

Asli Development Department (Jakoa).

"Out of that number, 72 areas involving 99 villages

have been gazetted.

"This is a measure to recognise and protect land occupied by the Orang Asli in

Perak," he added.

Mohd Zolkafly said Perak government was committed to providing electricity supply, through grid lines, and clean water to Orang Asli villages.

He said Jakoa has carried out maintenance work on water treatment systems in 52 Orang Asli villages, with an allocation of RM1.98mil.

The services included the maintenance, inspection and cleaning of dams, tanks, pipe systems, pump houses, electricity supply and other equipment.

"For areas without treatment systems or pump houses, Jakoa carried out dam and piping system repairs and upgrades," he said, adding that this would ensure the water treatment system functioned well for the Orang Asli to get clean water.

Mohd Zolkafly said Rural and Regional Development Ministry approved a RM28mil

allocation for two rural water supply projects.

The ministry would also provide basic infrastructure for the supply of electricity through installation of high- and low-voltage lines, and connection to existing grid lines owned by Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) through a rural electricity supply project, he elaborated.

"This project, which costs about RM29mil, began on April 21, 2023, involving 14 Orang Asli villages in Batang Padang and Muallim.

"The main reason for this project is to ensure 24-hour electricity supply to rural areas," he said.

He added that the department had also installed solar-powered lights in 42 villages.

"Through these steps, the government hopes to maintain and enhance basic facilities for the Orang Asli and look into their welfare," said Mohd Zolkafly.