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7MP-Reaction (BN)

BN LEADERS SAY 7MP GUARANTEES CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT

KUALA LUMPUR, May 6 (Bernama) -- Several Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders said the Seventh Malaysia Plan (7MP) tabled in the Dewan Rakyat today guarantees the nation's continued development in the next five years.

They said the plan, tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, not only stressed on economic development but also social development.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the poverty problem received priority under the plan.

"We must settle the problem before entering the 21st century even though it is an issue which cannot be resolved in a short period," he said

Samy Vellu, who is also the Works Minister, said many major projects would be implemented by the ministry under the 7MP.

"This include the construction of more buildings and infrastructure as well as roads to enhance the nation's development," he said.

Education Minister and Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the priority given to human resource development under the 7MP was a new emphasis which was related to educational and training development.

He said the four education Acts passed by the Parliament recently allowed more opportunities for the people to obtain education.

"The ministry is considering the possibility that the private sector establish universities like Telekom dan Petronas," he said.

Human Resource Minister and MCA vice-president Datuk Lim Ah Lek said the 7MP stressed on modern technology instead of labour-intensive industries.

"We will reduce dependency on foreign workers. The current situation is only temporary," he said.

He said skills training courses would be improved especially in the related industrial fields.

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said the 7MP also focussed on economic development apart from social development.

He was happy with the allocation provided for the transportation development in the country including the large allocation for development of ports.

Ling, who is the Transport Minister, said the five-year plan ensured a continuous infrastructure development.

Wanita Umno head Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz was happy that the 7MP provided a chapter for women's development programmes in the country.

"Since women contribute half the work force in the country, it is only appropriate a special chapter is provided for women's development programmes in the country," she said.

Government Backbenchers' Club chairman Ruhanie Ahmad said the government's move to review the Employment Act 1955 would protect the interests of women especially in their jobs.

He said at present many qualified women left their careers after getting married and this was a lost to the nation in terms of skilled manpower.

Ruhanie said the 7MP also focussed on information technology development.

The government also emphasised on the training sector to produce skilled workforce needed in the country.

Sabah Liberal Democratic Party president Senator Datuk Chong Kah Kiat

said Malaysia was among the few nations in the world which successfully implemented five-year development plans.

This success has laid the foundation for the nation's development enjoyed by the people.

"Economic stability from these plans and people's solidarity have garnered continuous support for the BN," he said.

Chong, who is also the Minister at the Prime Minister's Department, said the 7MP proved to the world that Malaysia was able to draw out and implement development strategies balanced between the economic and social aspects.

Parliamentary Secretary to the International Trade and Industry Ministry Datuk Hishamuddin Hussein, who is also an Umno Youth Exco member, said the 7MP provided a challenge to the younger generation towards the nation achieving the developed nation status by the year 2020.

The plan gave a clear guideline in determining the form of development as well as that of the community for the 21st century, Hishamuddin said.

Youths should be aware of their roles for the development plan and act more aggressive in curbing social ills among the younger generation.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik who is also the Primary Industries Minister said the party welcomed the five-year development plan since apart from involving all physical and social developments it also presented challenges to Malaysians.

He was also happy that the plan also stressed on ways to reduce the trade deficit apart from creating opportunities to improve the nation's exports.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said the 7MP also gave special attention to the development of the tourism and culture.

In the tourism field, the nation was not only seeking to increase the number of tourists arriving but also to attract more of those who spend large amounts of money, he said. -- BERNAMA

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