

13 SEP 2003

Budget-Sabah

A MEMORABLE PARTING BUDGET FROM PM

KOTA KINABALU, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) deputy president Datuk Dr Maximus Ongkili said the 2004 Budget was a memorable parting budget from the prime minister.

He said it was an excellent budget as it stressed domestic investment to enhance growth and strengthen the economic resilience of the country.

"Despite being a prudent budget, every sector has something to reap and benefit from tax or public spending initiative," he told Bernama when asked to comment on the budget which was tabled by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also finance minister.

Meanwhile, Sabah Progressive Party president Datuk Yong Teck Lee said the allocation of RM5.9 billion to Sabah in next year's budget was most encouraging and would help stimulate the state economy.

"The huge allocation to Sabah will definitely enhance the development of various sectors in the state, hence reduce poverty. It is also proof that Sabah enjoys benefits in the mainstream development of the country," he said in a statement here.

Yong also praised Dr Mahathir for tabling a positive and caring budget for next year, but he hoped the relevant authorities in the state were geared up to ensure effective implementation of all the development schemes and programmes.

He said the government had also provided a budget that benefited the lower income groups through the allocation of RM558.8 million for low-cost housing and the abolishment of road tax for motorcycles of 150 ccc and below.

The increase of tax relief for children from RM800 to RM1,000 would also lighten the financial burden of familis, he said.

"The government is giving special emphasis to the development of education by allocating RM20.2 billion to this sector and we believe education development in Sabah will also benefit from this allocation.

-- BERNAMA

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