

**DPM soothes Malay community's ETP jitters**  
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin today reassured the Malay and bumiputera community that they will not be left out of the economic transformation programme (ETP).

Addressing an audience of about 2,000 in Shah Alam today, Muhyiddin said the bumiputera agenda is still "number one" for the government.

"The perception is that the leadership is too eager to move the economy forward that it no longer prioritises bumiputera interests.

"The fact is the bumiputera agenda remains the main agenda for the government, then and now," he said, drawing thunderous applause.

He added that the issue is close to his heart and that he personally "cannot bear" to see Malays left by the wayside when their interests still need to be defended.

Muhyiddin (left) said that at a convention on the role of the bumiputera in the economy, organised by Gagasan Badan Ekonomi Melayu (Gabem) spearheaded by former Malacca chief minister Rahim Thamby Chik.

According to the deputy premier, Malay and bumiputera interests exist within the framework of the economic transformation programme, albeit not explicitly.

**ETP projects 'carved out' for bumiputera**

This is also true for the contractor class, which he said has complained of smaller takings from government procurements.

"Many have questioned if there is room for the bumiputera in the ETP and entry point projects.

"I have spoken to the Prime Minister and (Minister in the Prime Minister's Department) Idris Jala and have said that whatever the case, it is still possible to carve out a portion of the projects for capable bumiputera," he said.

He added that the meritocracy policy can still be in play as these projects will be tendered out to competitive bidding among bumiputera companies.

But to ensure that Malays and bumiputera can move forward in the economy, said Muhyiddin, the community must be united.

"The bumiputera agenda will only bear success if there is a unity of the ummah, of thought, heart and intention.

"Fighting among ourselves will bring no good," he said, echoing former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad's lament that the community is now split into three.