

Gov't not converting BR1M to vouchers

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PARLIAMENT The government does not intend to convert the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) of cash to coupons or vouchers as practised in the United States under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme (SNAP), said Deputy Finance Minister Ahmad Maslan.

Ahmad (left) said this was because the government had promised that the aid would be given in the form of cash and would be increased up to RM1,200 within five years, since its implementation in 2012.

"Secondly, we want recipients to get the exact value because if it is converted into vouchers, they will not be able to enjoy the full amount as traders will make a profit," he said during question time at the Dewan Rakyat sitting in Kuala Lumpur today.

He was replying to Irmohizam Ibrahim (BN-Kuala Selangor) who asked whether the government intended to replace BR1M to coupons or vouchers for goods as in SNAP programme to ensure recipients made proper use of the money.

Replying to a supplementary question from Irmohizam, Ahmad said the government would blacklist BR1M recipients who had made fraudulent claims.

He said so far, only 1,806 of the 6,776 recipients who had claimed twice, had refunded the money, while the remainder would be blacklisted.

He added, to prevent recurrence of such a problem, it was most likely that vouchers would no longer be issued but credited directly into recipients' accounts.

"Otherwise, we will issue a voucher with high security feature to avoid manipulation by recipients," he said.

Ahmad said this year, BR1M recipients totaled 7,86,268 with an allocation of RM5.2 billion.

- Bernama