

Don't take BR1M if you don't want it, Najib tells critics

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UMNO AGM Once again defending the disbursement of the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M), Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has told his critics that they have the choice of not opting to receive it.

BR1M, he said, has got nothing to do with 'dedak' (animal feed).

His insistence comes as critics continuously claim that the financial aid was used for Najib to "buy" votes.

"BR1M was a suggestion by Bank Negara, it was not my suggestion. But because I made the decision, (others claim) that it was as though I was buying votes.

"It's not about buying votes, I want to help rakyat who are not well-off.

"If you don't want BR1M, don't accept it, no problem," he said.

Najib also confirmed that the financial aid will be disbursed thrice next year.

The prime minister had earlier took into account the issue of cost of living. An issue, he added, which should be given attention.

However, Najib said this issue was not new, citing the time of Prophet Muhammad in which the latter was asked about the rising cost of goods.

The Prophet had reportedly said that the price of goods was determined by the market but the government must intervene when there is oppression and deception.

"Isn't that what that has been done by the BN government? When there is necessity, we do it," he said, citing hospitals built and the 1Malaysia clinics.

On the rising price of goods, Najib said the price of many things has not risen, citing the price of flour as an example.

"(The price of) sugar rose slightly. Sugar is like cigarettes, it's not good to consume too much sugar," he added.

Meanwhile, Najib also defended his trip to China last month, which he said was to bring investment to Malaysia.

"I won't give up our sovereignty. Being nice to China, what's wrong with that?

"China is part of Asia, they like us. Why do they like us? Because (former premier) Abdul

Razak (Hussein) started diplomatic ties with them,” he said, citing his late father.

Citing a Chinese proverb, Najib said the Chinese were only remembering the good deeds his father had done.

Najib had faced grumblings back home that he was “selling off” Malaysia in his China trip, with about US\$34 billion worth of deals.

The concerns emerge from a deep-seated distrust of the Chinese among Malaysia’s Malay-Muslim majority, who form the support base for Umno.

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