

DPM: Fret not, bumi privileges 'protected' in NEM
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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin (*below*) has once again laboured to assure the Malays that their rights will be observed in the New Economic Model (NEM).



In a speech at the Malay Chamber of Commerce's (MCCC) Hari Raya open house for chamber members, the deputy premier said that bumiputera rights and privileges are already inscribed in the NEM.

"It does not need to be said; Malay and bumiputera rights will be protected under the NEM. If you look at it closely, it is all there," he said.

Muhyiddin recounted the feedback he received from the Malay community immediately after the recently-concluded Economic Transformation Plan open day.

"Many bumiputera entrepreneurs had texted me, asking me where the gallery for bumiputeras is," he said, acknowledging the existence of Malay fears over the NEM.

"As mentioned by Prime Minister Najib Razak, the component of bumiputera participation in the country's economy is our commitment.

"So the planning of the Economic Transformation Plan (ETP) as listed in the National Key Economic Areas, without mentioning it one by one, is for bumiputera participation in the national economy," he said

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin also supported the MCCC's intention to set up its own "makmal Melayu" (Malay lab) to study the needs of Malay businessmen, mirroring labs set up by Pemandu.

"I support this initiative 100 percent. This is in line with the government's intention to maintain the bumiputera affirmative action in the NEM," said Muhyiddin.

"Concrete suggestions by the chamber of commerce will surely help the government in boosting Malay participation in all economic aspects," said Muhyiddin.

Malay lab proposed

Earlier, the MCCC president Syed Ali Al-Attas had mooted a 'Malay lab' to be conducted under the organisation's research and development arm Yayasan Kajian dan Pembangunan.

While that (minister in Prime Minister's Department) Idris Jala has his 12 labs, he had apparently forgotten one for the Malays, he said.

"With that MCCC has decided that we will set up our own Malay lab to study the socio-economic situation of Malay entrepreneurs," he said, adding that they will be compiling their report and sending it to the prime minister.

Najib's brainchild, the NEM is meant to transform the Malaysian economy into one that is

geared towards high income while promoting growth in the skilled sector.

However, much of the economic plan would involve liberalising the country's market and reviewing affirmative action, replacing the New Economic Policy.

It has since drawn the ire and much fear by several Malay-rights NGOs, that claim that the new plan will erode the protection of the Malays as enshrined in the federal constitution.

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