

Safeguarding Interest Of Bumiputera Remains Govt's Main Agenda
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SHAH ALAM -- Assisting and safeguarding the interest and welfare of the Bumiputera remains the main agenda of leaders and the government today, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin said.

"So, the Bumiputera need not worry if the word Bumiputera is not used or repeated numerous times when implementing policies or the New Economic Policy," he said when closing the two-day convention "Empowering the New Economic Model: A Bumiputera Economic Jihad", organised by the Gagasan Badan Ekonomi Melayu (GABEM) at Universiti Teknologi Mara, here yesterday.

Muhyiddin said that though the interest and welfare of all races would be taken into consideration when implementing the country's economic development policy, the interest of the Malays and Bumiputera would not be denied or forgotten.

"I myself am not be willing to see a situation whereby no efforts are made to help or assist the needs of the Malays, as long as they are needed," said Muhyiddin when commenting on recent speculation and perception by some that the leaders and government was not giving importance to Bumiputera.

He added that was a group of Malays who want to distance themselves from Barisan Nasional (BN) as if "We are not championing their rights and interest."

"There is also perception that Bumiputera are not given priority or importance in the awarding of contracts and the worth of such contracts were not lucrative enough.

"This included the awarding of projects under the Government Transformation Programme since questions were raised by some," he said.

Muhyiddin said maybe capable Bumiputera companies can compete among themselves and be selected to participate in the government transformation projects through the tender system based on meritocracy or qualification.

He said the government was serious in assisting Bumiputera entrepreneurs, and the Unit Peneraju Agenda Bumiputera (Teraju) was formed to assist Bumiputera to play an active role in the corporate sector.

"The role and main objective of Teraju is critical to lead, coordinate and drive Bumiputera transformation and participation in the economy to reduce the economic gap that exists between Bumiputerases and other races.

"Within a year Teraju had identified 1,100 potential Bumiputera companies that has the potential to be listed in the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange," he said.

Muhyiddin said he had also received 25 resolutions proposed during the convention, to be submitted to Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak.

(Bernama)