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Najib: Four reasons why Dr M made U-turn on BR1M issue

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KUALA LUMPUR: The World Bank's recognition of direct financial aid is one reason why Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad made a U-turn on his stand against the Malaysia People's Aid (BRIM), said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Najib said the former prime minister's back-peddalling was also due to the latter's realisation that the financial aid had benefited the people.

Najib, in a statement published on his website yesterday, cited four reasons why Dr Mahathir made a U-turn on the issue.

"Firstly, he (Dr Mahathir) is aware of the study conducted by the World Bank and Stanford researchers, which proved that direct financial aid are spent prudently and for the welfare of the (receivers') families."

He said the study also proved that

the receivers of financial aid were not lazy, as claimed by Dr Mahathir.

"Secondly, financial aid like BRIM are given out in countries around the world, and they are recognised by economists as a catalyst for economic growth.

"Thirdly, the opposition friends of this senior leader (Dr Mahathir) have implemented aid (programmes) similar to BRIM," said Najib.

He said Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azmin Ali had given schoolchildren in the state money to pay for school entrance fees, while Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng had given financial aid to the poor.

"Fourthly, BRIM is given to the low-income group, regardless of (their) political ideology. We didn't ask them to vote for Barisan Nasional, unlike

Azmin Ali's coupons, which feature his face."

Najib said this was not the first time Dr Mahathir had back-peddled on an issue.

Last month, during the official launch of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia in Selangor, Dr Mahathir said BRIM might continue to be given out by the opposition if they won the 14th General Election.