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# PM: Mahathir a 'U-turn champion'

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## Najib hits out at Dr M's changed stance on 1Malaysia People's Aid

By ONG HAN SEAN  
hansean@thestar.com.my

**PEKAN:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has called Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad a "U-turn champion" for his changed stance on the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M).

Najib said the former prime minister had stated that BR1M was bribery and wrong in the eyes of the law on Dec 26 last year.

"Now, just three weeks later, he has changed his mind and has performed a U-turn. Looking at his actions lately, Dr Mahathir is doing a lot of U-turns.

"We can deem him as a U-turn champion. He is prone to actions that contradict his own previous stance," Najib told reporters after

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Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak

presenting awards to excellent students and teachers at the UPSR and PT3 exams here yesterday.

On Saturday, Dr Mahathir, who is chairman of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), said BR1M would be maintained if his party wins the next general election.

Dr Mahathir said, however, it would have to be made into a statu-

tory aid determined by law and the budget.

Najib said the Government did not regard BR1M as bribery as similar aid was also presented by the governments of Penang and Selangor.

"Even when Dr Mahathir was prime minister, he dispensed special cash aid in Terengganu. If you look at PPBM's website, it is written there they are willing to assist those who want to apply for BR1M," he said.

Najib added that PPBM president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin had also defended BR1M when he was still in Umno.

Najib said BR1M should not be used as political material because the targeted subsidy was a more efficient way of helping those who

needed aid.

"The criterion to qualify for the aid is only income level. It has nothing to do with anyone's political leanings," he said.

On PPBM's election promise of replacing the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Najib said this was not grounded in reality as GST contributed a large sum of revenue to the Government.

"They are playing to sentiments when they are not taking reality into account at all. What other sources of revenue can they get to match the RM40bil collected from GST?

"GST is a progressive tax system that has been implemented by more than 120 countries. India is also going to adopt GST soon at three different rates with the highest at 23%. Ours is among the lowest," he said.

In his speech during the event, Najib said the nation's success in education was dependent on all segments of the community.

He said if there was contribution and support from all, education in Malaysia could reach new heights.

"Education is important for any country. The fortunes of a civilisation depend on knowledge.

"Our ambitions for our children and country must be translated into commitment to education.

"Strengthening education is not only the job of the Government but requires the personal commitment of everyone," said Najib.



For more stories:  
See page 6