

Rural Health Top Priority To BN Government, Says Dr Maximus Ongkili
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KOTA MARUDU, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- Rural health is top priority to the Barisan Nasional government as reflected in the proposed Budget 2012, said Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili.

He said the government's proposed measures outlined in the budget were to ensure the standard of health care and facilities in the rural areas were on par with that in the urban areas.

"These include the budget allocation to build and upgrade rural hospitals, as well as the upgrading of 81 rural health clinics nationwide and launch of 50 new 1Malaysia clinics, including one in Kota Marudu and another in Kudat," he said when launching a health carnival at the Kota Marudu recently.

Ongkili, who is also Kota Marudu Member of Parliament, also said the budget was good news to senior citizens over 60 years old who would get to enjoy the exemption of outpatient registration fee at government hospitals, clinics and 1Malaysia clinics, and free human papilloma virus (HPV) immunisation for unmarried women to protect them against cervical cancer.

He described the budget as bold and unprecedented in many aspects which included the new remuneration scheme for civil servants with better annual increments, extension of the retirement age, free primary and secondary school education and the one-off payment of RM500 for households with a monthly income of RM3,000 and below.

Regarding Sabah Progressive Party president Datuk Yong Teck Lee's view that the budget was a disappointment for Sabah, Ongkili said the state opposition politician's opinion was wrong arithmetic", adding that there was something in the budget for every section of the Malaysian people, including pensioners, civil servants, women and youths.

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