

Sabah Leader Dismisses Opposition Claim Over Budget 2012
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KENINGAU (Sabah), Oct 11 (Bernama) -- Sabah Assistant Rural Development Minister Datuk Sairin Karno has dismissed an opposition claim that Budget 2012 was a letdown for the people of Sabah.

The budget had many benefits for Sabahans, especially in terms of subsidies, rural infrastructure and education, he said in reference to a statement by the Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP) that the budget had not considered several aspects including the proposal to build a power plant in Lahad Datu.

"Honestly, I see Budget 2012 making a positive contribution to the welfare of the people, not only in Sabah but also in Sarawak and the peninsula," Sairin told Bernama.

He said this could be seen in the government's decision to retain subsidies at a cost of RM33.2 billion for food, such as rice, sugar, cooking oil and wheat flour, and electricity bills and petroleum products.

"Many people in Sabah, especially in the interior, are in dire need of these subsidised items," he said.

He also said that the rural infrastructure improvement at a cost of RM5 billion would have a positive impact on the livelihood of the rural population, especially in Sabah.

Sairin lauded the one-off payment of RM3,000 to ex-members of the special constable and auxiliary police who served in protecting the country during the emergency era, as well as their widows and widowers.

He said many people in Sabah had served in these units and the payment would be most meaningful for them.

He also welcomed the decision to do away with fees for primary and secondary students from next year, saying this would ease the financial burden of low-income parents especially in the rural areas.

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