

Budget has people in mind, says PM
New Straits Times
October 20, 2011

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has called on the people to support the government in implementing the 2012 Budget.

He said the Budget was designed with the "people in mind and their support is essential for the country to move ahead towards its goal to become a fully developed and high-income nation".

"I assure you, the government and the people want the same thing: to be able to enjoy strong and continuous economic growth in harmony," he said in his 1Malaysia blog yesterday.

Najib said he appreciated the feedback received on the budget in his blog, Facebook and Twitter account, as well as from people he had met.

He said the budget was in line with the slogan "People First, Performance Now". He said the government had introduced several measures to ease the financial burden of the people during these challenging times.

Among them is a one-off payment of RM500 for all Malaysian households with a monthly income of RM3,000 or below; more funding for the KAR1SMA anti-poverty programme, help for poor senior citizens with RM300 a month and RM100 a month to poor children as well as assisting disabled Malaysians. Almost 500,000 will benefit from KAR1SMA alone.

Other measures include boosting house ownership among Malaysians, abolition of annual fees for primary and secondary students and a RM200 book voucher for all Malaysians in Form 6 and in higher education institutions nationwide.

Najib also said in providing financial support, it would be irresponsible for the government not to equip the people with the skills and tools to be financially independent and secure.

"We all cannot move forward if you survive only on the fish we give. You need the ability and skills to fish for yourselves. When you are skilled and able, we will successfully transform."

Certain programmes, such as to encourage innovation among youth and residents in rural areas, were introduced to achieve this.

Others include training programmes for retired army personnel without pensions to enter into business and assistance with job placements, micro-lending facilities through Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM), funds to encourage innovation among small- and medium-enterprises and to assist the revitalisation of their business, introducing the MyCreative Venture Capital to provide funding for new and innovative business ideas from youths and skills training programmes, including Strategic Action Youth 1Malaysia (SAY 1Malaysia) for

youths who did not continue their studies.

The prime minister said called for the support and participation of the people to achieve a different and far better outcome for this generation, and for generations to come.

Copyright © 2011 The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad.

Source: <http://www.nst.com.my/nst/articles/4pmjb/Article>