

**BR1M: Public Money For Public - Muhyiddin  
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KUANTAN, Feb 16 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the aid, Bantuan Rakyat Malaysia (BR1M), was no bribe for the people but public money given back to those in need.

He said the aid was given to all those eligible regardless of their background and political ideology.

"This is the people's money, it's not wrong to give it back to them. Even individuals from Pas go on stage to receive the aid," Muhyiddin said in his speech today at a 1Malaysia People's Feast held at the Air Balok Recreation Centre in Beserah, here, which was attended by more than 20,000 people.

Also present were his wife Puan Seri Noorainee Abdul Rahman, Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob, Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Human Resources Deputy Minister Datuk Maznah Mazlan and Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Ahmad Maslan.

Muhyiddin said the Barisan Nasional (BN) government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak was always sensitive to the burden faced by the people.

"The BN government offers the people whatever it can afford, and has not taken out loans to provide aid such as the BR1M. The government uses its own savings," he said.

Muhyiddin said the government also spent RM33 billion per year in subsidies for goods to ease the people's burden.

"A sum of RM10 billion to RM12 billion in subsidies for fuel alone, and many do not realise that we also subsidise sugar price, which makes it lower than the price in Thailand although it is the 6th biggest sugar producer in the world."

The deputy prime minister said the government had implemented various programmes and provided various forms of aid to lessen the people's financial burden from the high cost of living.

"One of the issues played up by the opposition in the run-up to the coming general election is the rising cost of living, but the government has been assisting the people to raise their income through various aid given to farmers, traders and so on.

"The many initiatives are to ensure that the people get a good income and productivity increased, and to control inflation and reduce government expenditure."

Muhyiddin said the government had also introduced price control to ensure the people were not burdened by high prices of goods.

"If the BN government has not intervened, the prices would have been high, resulting in very high cost of living," he said.

In order to attain developed nation status, Muhyiddin said, the government targeted to achieve a per capita income of US\$15,000 by 2020 from US\$9,500 now.

"We need to maintain economic growth at five per cent annually. The BN government has a vision and is far-sighted. We don't just want to address the problems of today but also of the future generations."

Muhyiddin said the people needed to support the government's transformation efforts and to realise that without sound planning and transformation, even some of the developed and rich countries in Europe could become poor.

At the event, he also announced a number of development allocations totalling RM19.8 million for the area.

The projects include building of the Chengal Lempong mosque in Beserah (RM4 million), multipurpose hall in Kampung Peramu, Kuantan (RM1 million), upgrading of the drainage system in Beserah fishing village (RM3.5 million), and rebuilding of stalls and fish market in Beserah (RM6 million).

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