

**No Political Motives In BR1M: Muhyiddin
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SEMPORNA, Jan 17 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has denied that the 1Malaysia People's Assistance (BR1M) scheme was politically-motivated to win the support of the people in the coming general election.

On the other hand he stressed that the programme was introduced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to ease the burden of the people who had to bear rising cost of living.

"Our intention is good. There is no ulterior motive and this programme we promised is practical," he said in his speech at a meet-the-people session and the launch of the "Sentuhan Rakyat" leader-people's programme here today.

Also present were Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman and Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal.

According to Muhyiddin, the BR1M programme was a follow-up to the feedback received by prime minister from the people regarding their problems, among which was high cost of living due to rising price of essentials.

He pointed out that the BR1M was not the only programme introduced by the Najib to assist the people and cited the RM100 assistance to students and RM200 book vouchers for students of public higher learning institutions.

"The BR1M will benefit four million households involving an allocation of about RM2 billion. When the opposition saw that people were getting such assistance they became worried.

"The opposition is trying to deceive the people with promises of the moon and the stars including abolishing the PTPTN loan, and toll.

"This is not at all practical because if we abolish the PTPTN how can we give other students the opportunity to pursue higher education?

"Similarly with the toll. The concessionaires have spent billions of ringgit to build the facility for the people. If there is no toll, the government would have to pay compensation," he stressed.

Muhyiddin said besides the assistance, the prime minister also introduced the National Key Result Areas (NKRA) to include security, education, fighting corruption and improving public transportation.

"Malaysia has been among the safest and most peaceful nations in the world since achieving independence more than 50 years ago," he said.

On fighting crime, he said through the NKRA, crime rate in the country has been reduced by 26 per cent as targeted.

He also pointed out that the government placed great emphasis on education, allocating the sector with the highest slice or 26 per cent of the national development allocation, while billions of ringgit were being spent to build infrastructures including in Sabah and Sarawak to ensure people in the rural areas were not sidelined.

On politics, Muhyiddin said he was confident Semporna would continue to be a BN stronghold and hoped the people in the state would rally behind BN in the coming election.

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