

Budget Incentives: Muhyiddin Calls On Civil Servants, Teachers To Perform Better
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 8 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has described the 2012 Budget as the best in the country's history as it pays attention to all levels of society, besides balancing the national deficit in a climate of global economic uncertainties.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had tabled a balanced budget where Malaysia would be able to balance economic growth with efforts to reduce the national deficit to the targeted 4.7 per cent in 2012.

Muhyiddin, who is also Education Minister, also welcomed improvements in the public sector, particularly education, which has received special incentives.

Thus, he called on the 1.3 million public servants including 480,000 teachers, who will be receiving special incentives, to be prepared to serve the people better.

He said the incentives given to public servants were part of the government's effort to improve overall service delivery.

"The announcement (made by the prime minister) had been eagerly awaited by all public servants, especially those in the Education Ministry.

"I hope that with this better offer, they are only happy but will improve their work quality and have the spirit to shoulder bigger responsibilities, especially as the school education sector is important in producing quality human capital for the country."

Muhyiddin said this at a news conference after the tabling of the 2012 Budget in the Dewan Rakyat Friday.

Among the incentives for the public service is the New Civil Service Remuneration Scheme (SBPA) to replace the Malaysian Remuneration Scheme (SSM). Under the new scheme, public servants will receive an annual salary increase of between RM80 and RM320, depending on their grades, from 2012.

Those who opt for the SBPA will get a salary increment of seven to 13 per cent, besides extending their retirement age from 58 to 60. There will also be a better grade improvement deal for teachers.

The education sector also receives other benefits including a RM1 billion special fund for the construction, improvement and maintenance of schools, book vouchers for all students at the higher level and abolishment of the additional fee of RM24.50 for primary and RM33.50 for secondary students.

The fee abolishment involve RM72.4 million covering 2,956,397 primary students and RM80.4 million involving 2,400,835 secondary students.

Muhyiddin said with this decision, the parent-teacher associations should not be imposing any fee on students and if necessary to finance certain projects, they should first refer the matter to the state education authorities.

He said he would announce in detail the improvements to the education sector early next month.

On the introduction of the SBPA, Muhyiddin said the decision was made after the government had held discussions with the relevant parties including Cuepacs and NUTP.

Asked on claims that the 2012 Budget is "general election budget", Muhyiddin said: "I don't think the general election was a major consideration as today's situation requires the government to be sensitive to the people's needs."

He said the Barisan National government had all these years tabled a national budget that emphasised on the welfare of the people and this year, the spirit was in line with the 1Malaysia concept of people being the priority.

On the duty on cigarettes which has not been raised, Muhyiddin said the revenue from that sufficed, and raising the price of cigarettes might cause other problems like increased smuggling of the item.

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