

BUDGET: 2013 Budget Proves PM's Commitment To Accomodate All Groups
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28 (Bernama) -- Once again Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak remained consistent with his commitment to put the people first by providing something for almost every group when tabling the 2013 Budget in Parliament today. The 2013 Budget, themed 'Prospering The Nation, Enhancing Well-Being of the Rakyat: A Promise Fulfilled' covers five main focus in line with the concept of 'People First, Performance Now' which has become a pillar of his administration. The five areas are Stimulating Economic Activities, Empowering Education and Training, Acculturation of Innovation, Increasing Productivity, Fiscal Consolidation and Enhancing Efficiency of Public Service and the People's Wellbeing. Disabled children, farmers, fishermen, retired civil servants, pension less ex-servicemen, school bus operators, students and ferry users in Sarawak, Labuan and Sabah are among those who received the government's attention. With a strengthened national economy, following government revenue next year estimated at RM208.6 billion, the government will continue to reduce deficit to four per cent.

As expected, the 2013 Budget which was tabled in two hours and 15 minutes, allocated a large portion to education with RM38.7 billion, or 21 per cent of the overall budget. The 2013 Budget showcased a bigger expenditure of RM251.6 billion compared with RM232.8 billion allocated during the 2012 Budget. Najib also introduced several new incentives in the budget, which included the first nursery for disabled children, the Takaful Padi Protection Scheme for owners of paddy fields, extension of the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) to single unmarried individuals aged 21 and above who earn RM2,000 monthly. Youths aged between 21 and 30 will also enjoy one-off rebates worth RM200 for smart phones, as well as a one and a half month bonus for civil servants. To lessen the burden of medical treatment for the public, 70 more 1Malaysia Clinics will be opened nationwide next year while Malaysians earning below RM3,000 will enjoy a 50 per cent discount to use KTMB komuter services. In line with the government's philosophy and readiness to listen to the peoples woes, the government is providing RM1.9 billion to build 123,000 reasonably priced homes in strategic areas throughout the country. Besides announcing a reduced sugar subsidy of 20 sen per kilogramme, Najib also called on traders to not burden the people by increasing prices of goods. While stating that this would be the last budget before the 13th general election, Najib also confidently predicted that the country would see the Barisan Nasional (BN) government table six more budgets.

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