

Muhyiddin Dispels Negative Notion On Bumiputera Economic Empowerment Agenda
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KOTA KINABALU, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin Monday dispelled the negative notion among certain groups who portrayed the picture that the Bumiputera Economic Empowerment Agenda unveiled by the Prime Minister on Sept 14 is discriminatory.

Defending implementation of the Bumiputera agenda, he said the agenda was not a policy that would harm growth but instead was a policy that could bolster the country's economy, hence creating social justice in this country.

"The move we took to empower Bumiputeras' economy should not be seen by any group in a negative perception as though the agenda is a discriminatory policy.

"Actually, the agenda is not discriminatory. Even in our country's development agenda, people from all strata of society benefited.

"During the New Economic Policy era, Bumiputeras' participation in the economic sector increased and until today their participation has increased to 23 per cent, but the non-Bumiputera community has progressed far ahead, they earn higher income and are engaged in all economic activities," he said when speaking at the Sabah Bumiputera Economic Empowerment event.

Listing out the government's initiative to empower Bumiputeras' economic status, Muhyiddin said various programmes to strengthen Bumiputeras' socio-economic development agenda have been introduced including channelling RM920.6 million allocation through Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM) (nearly RM1 billion) to 60,766 people in this state to help hardcore poor to do business at micro level.

"AIM will continue to create business opportunities to petty traders in Sabah through the RM300 million new fund announced by the government," he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the government has created opportunities for wider access to any business funds for Bumiputera entrepreneurs.

Among the funds whose allocations have been increased are for programmes under TEKUN, AIM and MARA, he said.

Muhyiddin said entrepreneurs in Sabah also have the chance to increase their participation in entrepreneurial programmes such as the Vendor Development Programme implemented by government-linked companies.

He said the programmes would be adjusted with the bank loan repayment period to ensure that the projects proceeded smoothly.

Bumiputera entrepreneurs' companies in Sabah particularly engaged in the manufacturing and industrial sectors have the potential and opportunity to join the Bumiputera Companies' Consortium led by government-linked companies in efforts to strengthen the supply value chain.

Muhyiddin said the Bumiputera Entrepreneurs' Start-Up Scheme (SUPERB), set up to help Bumiputera companies to start business operations, would be expanded to Sabah.

He also said a RM500,000 grant has been allocated to encourage creativity and innovation among Bumiputera entrepreneurs who have the potential in strategic fields.

"The government will also strengthen the Bumiputera Agenda Steering Unit (in the Prime Minister's Department) (TERAJU) through an innovative means of managing under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to create a Bumiputera Entrepreneurs Community, he added.

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