

'BR1M criteria remains for now'

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Deputy Finance Minister encourages those not eligible for BR1M to open businesses and gather knowledge while enjoying other forms of subsidies.

KUALA LUMPUR: The Finance Ministry will not expand the BR1M cash vouchers criteria to include the burgeoning middle class, but reminded the group that they still enjoyed government subsidies.

"We don't intend to change the criteria for BR1M. I don't know about next year, though," Deputy Finance Minister Ahmad Maslan told the Dewan Rakyat during the question session this morning.

"But I reckon all youths enjoy a variety of subsidies from the government, along with the rest of Malaysia. This includes Ron95, diesel, flour, cooking oil and rice."

The Pontian MP was responding to a supplementary question from Anuar Abdul Manap (BN-Sekijang), who asked whether the ministry would consider distributing BR1M to single youths earning above RM2,000 as well.

"Many youths with degrees earn around RM3,000. These single youths are not eligible for BR1M because they earn more than RM1,000, yet usually they come from lower or middle income groups and must care for their families," said Anuar.

"Is the ministry ready to expand the terms of the BR1M requirements so that they too can receive it? What are the short term steps taken to ensure they do not face financial difficulty?"

Ahmad responded that the government had aided these groups by providing a slew of subsidies which they continue to enjoy.

"However, regardless of direct or indirect help that we give, what is most important is the attitude of these youths.

"When you know that you earn a certain amount, then don't spend more than that. Also, look for other methods to increase your income, such as opening up businesses," Ahmad suggested, adding that they could seek help from Amanah Ikhtiar and Tekun.

He also told youths not eligible for BR1M to continue seeking knowledge, as this could increase their income and bring happiness to their lives.

The RM300 cash voucher is only available for youths aged 21 and above, and earning a gross monthly income of not more than RM2,000.

Meanwhile, households earning below RM3,000 are entitled for RM650 cash aid, and households earning an income between RM3,000 and RM4,000 are eligible for RM450.

A total of 6.48 million individuals received the BR1M cash vouchers this year involving an allocation of RM3.37 billion.

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