

Deputy minister blames cheaters for BR1M double-dipping

The Malaysian Insider

April 8, 2015

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Dishonest recipients of federal cash aid Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) were to blame for the over RM3 million lost because of repeated claims of the cash vouchers, Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Ahmad Maslan said in Parliament today.

When asked how Putrajaya had allowed thousands of BR1M recipients to cash their vouchers multiple times, Ahmad said it all boiled down to cheating recipients.

"It is because they want to lie. For example, during the incident where there are many BR1M recipients at certain areas, such as in big halls, some would line up twice (to claim the cash)," he said during the question session this morning.

"Secondly, which is also due to ill-intentions, the recipients claim that they have lost their vouchers, and turn up at LHDN (Lembaga Hasil dalam Negeri or Inland Revenue Board) to replace it," he said.

Ahmad added that those who had yet to reimburse the government for the multiple claims would be blacklisted from receiving BR1M in the future.

"Some begged to be allowed to pay back through instalments, we are giving them a chance," he added.

To prevent this from happening in the future, Ahmad said the BR1M money would either be banked directly into the recipients' accounts, or vouchers with certain security features would be distributed.

The first series of the 2014 Auditor-General's Report found that thousands of Malaysians cashed out their BR1M vouchers more than once, costing Putrajaya over RM3 million between 2012 and 2014.

The report revealed that 2,188 (0.05%) of aid recipients cashed their vouchers at least twice in 2012, worth RM1.11 million; 2,490 (0.04%) in 2013, worth RM1.14 million; and 1,899 (0.03%) in 2014, worth RM1.09 million.

As of December 2014, 1,555 of the 2012 BR1M recipients; 1,850 of the 2013 BR1M recipients; and 1,401 of the 2014 BR1M recipients which made repeated claims had yet to repay the Finance Ministry, the report added. – April 8, 2015.

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