

**BR1M Not Meant To Encourage People to Be Dependent On Government - PM  
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PEKAN, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) was not meant to encourage the people to continue to be dependent on the government but to stimulate the local economy.

Najib said BR1M which was introduced in 2012 not only could help alleviate the people's burden but was also proven could stimulate the local economy when the money was spent at shops, farmers or night markets for buying basic necessities.

Citing the Pekan constituency as an example, Najib, who is also its MP, said this year RM31.5 million was allocated to pay BR1M to 43,729 recipients which was a huge amount.

"If we were to look at it, we (government) are giving all kinds of aid. Not because we want the people to continue to be dependent on the government...we want the people to be independent, to continue to work hard.

"Nevertheless, as head of the government, looking after the welfare of the people must be given priority by the government. That is why after I became prime minister, various forms of aid that had yet to be introduced I implemented," he said.

Najib was speaking at a gathering with the local community in Kampung Nenasai Pantai here today.

"...RM31.5 million acted as a catalyst for the local economy. Who got the RM31.5 million? Certainly the traders, hawkers and those selling essential goods and now those selling school items," he added.

As such, Najib said BR1M was not only focused on the people's welfare, but should be seen from the economic angle and that it would certainly impact hawkers as well if it was not there.

He also took to task those who questioned aid given by the government including the opposition who described BR1M as "dedak" (animal feed), when in fact if it was not given, they would accuse the government of not looking after the welfare of the people.

"Yes, we not stopping giving out aid in various forms. Only those with eyes but refuse to see, have ears but refuse to listen or purposely want to instigate the people are in denial about aid provided by the government.

"I feel it will be difficult for us to see aid like these given in other countries...not likely like what is given by the government led by UMNO and the Barisan Nasional," he said.

Najib also rapped the opposition for always instigating the people to hate any action by the government including politicising his official trip to China by implying that 'he was trying to sell off the country'.

He added that all these were done as the opposition was unable to do whatever was being implemented by the government so much they had no substantial issues left to talk about.

In his speech, Najib also touched on the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project which not only benefited the people in urban areas by reducing traffic congestion, but also created job opportunities for youths from rural areas.

"It's not just the MRT but also the construction of the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) from Port Klang passing by the interiors of Pahang, which according to an estimate, will add 1.5 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product of the East Coast," he said.

At the programme, Najib also approved an allocation of RM5 million to solve water supply problems in Nenasi and Tanjung Batu, Pekan as well as another RM500,000 for projects to prevent coastal erosion in Nenasi.

He also announced a RM50,000 allocation for the purchase of new ice machines for the use of fishermen in Nenasi, in addition to handing over financial assistance totalling RM4.07 million from the National Entrepreneurial Group Economic Fund (Tekun Nasional) to 332 entrepreneurs in the Pekan parliamentary.

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