

Budget 2018: It's Truly Comprehensive - Ahmad Zahid

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27/10/2017

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 27 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has described the 2018 Budget as truly comprehensive as it covered all segments of society which left the opposition disappointed.

The Deputy Prime Minister regarded the tabling of the 2018 Budget as the finest hour for Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak since Najib became Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

"I think they (opposition) are frustrated that this is such a good budget," he said in referring to the action of the opposition who created a ruckus by carrying placards and shouting 'kleptokrasi' at the end of the tabling of the budget by the prime minister in the Dewan Rakyat today.

Ahmad Zahid said this was because the budget not only focused on the 40 per cent in the lowest income group (B40) and the 40 per cent in the middle income bracket (M40) but even minority groups.

"We also acknowledge the deep caring attitude by the prime minister not only to the police and military, in fact, to workers in the public sector whereby those who are pregnant five months and more are allowed to go home an hour early. Surely, such aspects do not incur costs to the budget but will impact significantly on the recipients of the facility," he said.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Home Minister, also thanked the prime minister as his ministry received the fourth-biggest allocation among all the ministries.

"The RM250 million allocation for RELA (People's Volunteer Corps) especially for necessary equipment including uniforms is the biggest thus far. Only RM80 million was allocated in the budget last year.

"This is because RELA has a membership of 3.05 million and surely, with such a budget, it can provide standardisation for those who are active, and I expect 25 per cent of the members are very active and qualify for uniforms," he said.

He said the announcement on the building of 10,000 units under the Royal Malaysia Police 1Malaysia Civil Servant Housing Scheme would help police personnel own homes, other than the RM720 million for the construction of police headquarters, police stations and the purchase of firearms and RM50 million to boost weaponry asset capability.

According to Ahmad Zahid, the allocations received were also set to empower national security and public order in the effort to tackle crimes and terrorism.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Zahid expressed his excitement at the recognition given to him by Najib when tabling the 2018 Budget.

"When it comes to appreciation by the head of government to his deputy, and as an old friend who is together with him, I feel very appreciated," he said.

The prime minister, when tabling the budget, said he was fortunate for having not only having Ahmad Zahid as his deputy, but much more than that, a loyal friend.

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