

Budget covers all sectors - Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 2 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the 2019 Budget tabled today covered every sector in detail without stretching the country's financial capabilities.

He said the budget took into account provisions for women, youth, mosques and other religious buildings, Bumiputera rights as well as the rights of Sabah and Sarawak.

“We try to meet the aspirations of the people while at the same time our budget spending is not more than our income. We do not have a loan to set up a new company so that we can steal money.

“We are very careful, we spend only on what we can, if we don't have the money then we will not spend any,” he told reporters after the tabling of the 2019 Budget by Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng at the Dewan Rakyat today.

When asked on the allocation for the Education Ministry, the recipient of the largest allocation of RM60.2 billion or 19.1 per cent of the total government expenditure , Dr Mahathir said it was because education was very important for the people and the country.

I wanted to be Minister of Education, they did not allow me, but still we need to educate our people because the knowledge field has changed considerably. Nowadays you have to learn more things, not like before.

“Before you read the history of the British empire or the geography of England, we didn't know our own geography, those times we learn only about those (pre- and early post Independence education). But now we have to learn about IT, technology, science,

mathematics, algorithms, we have to learn or we will be left behind,” he said.

In the meantime, the prime minister said Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng had an important task to provide information and clarification in detail on measures taken by the government via the 2019 Budget, especially on market forces.

“The people’s reaction is an important thing and if they don’t understand then their interpretation may be inaccurate, therefore the finance minister and other officials including from Bank Negara Malaysia and members of the government themselves will explain,” he said.

Dr Mahathir also welcomed analyses and criticisms from various parties including the media pertaining the 2019 Budget.

“We (the government) are ready to respond to any criticism, and clarification will be made if there is something that is still unclear,” he said.

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