

PM stands by fair policy for all

Muhyiddin: Shared prosperity policy considers interests of all races

KUALA LUMPUR: The poverty eradication programme has been implemented not only by taking into consideration the racial and ethnic composition, but also various other factors to create fair and equal opportunities for all, says Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

The Prime Minister said it was also to ensure that the country's wealth could be distributed and enjoyed equally by the people.

"The Perikatan Nasional government's policy is to implement a comprehensive poverty eradication programme and this takes into account the disparities between bumiputra and non-bumiputra, regional and non-regional areas including in Sabah and Sarawak after various initiatives done previously," he said.

Muhyiddin said this in reply to Senator Datuk Razali Idris who wanted to know about the government's initiatives to tackle poverty in Kelantan, Terengganu, Sabah and Sarawak.

He said the emphasis on the efforts to improve bumiputra's socio-economic status did not mean the government was sidelining the non-bumiputra, hence the creation of the Shared Prosperity Vision policy which took into consideration the interests of all races.

"Nevertheless, the bumiputra make up the majority with almost 70% of the country's total population.

"That is why the government focuses on them to develop the economy as a whole," he said.

Muhyiddin, however, said the government was always concerned with the problems faced by the non-bumiputra and would not



Equality for all: Muhyiddin emphasising fair and equal opportunities for all races in the country when answering questions in Dewan Negara. — Bernama

neglect them, especially in terms of poverty.

"We cannot let them live in poverty because they are non-bumiputra, we cannot just help the Malays to be richer.

"No, we cannot. We must have a fair policy for all races in the country," he said, adding that one of the problems faced by the government in the efforts to eradicate poverty was the lack of a database which has complete information on bumiputra's current achievements in various economic sectors.

For that, he said the government had established the Bumiputra Agenda Steering Unit (Teraju), as the secretariat to coordinate and steer the bumiputra agenda in a bid

to increase the bumiputra's share of the economy.

To empower the bumiputra economy, Muhyiddin said focus would also be given on their participation in certain sectors, such as industrial, banking, manufacturing and electronic, where the government could identify their weaknesses and introduce certain initiatives to ensure they would not lag behind compared to others.

On Razali's question on the effectiveness of the Bumiputra Prosperity Council (MKB), the Prime Minister said bumiputra poverty rate stood at 7.2% in 2019 while the unemployment rate for the second quarter of this year was 5.2% compared to the national average of 5.1%.

Muhyiddin said bumiputra equity ownership in the corporate sector was only 16.2% in 2015 compared to non-bumiputra's 30.7% and foreign ownership of 45.3%.

As such, he said the MKB was the highest platform to renew and strengthen all the bumiputra socio-economic development plans.

"The setting up of the council is part of the strategic intervention framework to steer and accelerate the empowerment of bumiputra economy through capacity and capability building efforts across various programmes.

"To ensure the council will achieve its objectives, it will be supported by two committees, namely the steering committee to be chaired by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Special Functions) and the Working Committee to be chaired by Teraju chief executive officer.

"Both committees will meet periodically and involve all the relevant implementing agencies. The council convened its first meeting on Aug 11, 2020," he said.

Muhyiddin also said the achievements of the ministry, as well as the relevant agencies and non-governmental organisations in mobilising the bumiputra empowerment agenda, would be monitored and evaluated through a Key Performance Indicator framework which would involve all the heads of the relevant agencies. — Bernama

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