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UNTIL
TIME 1600, FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2012

THE 2013 BUDGET SPEECH

By

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PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE

INTRODUCING THE SUPPLY BILL (2013)

IN THE DEWAN RAKYAT
FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2012

“PROSPERING THE NATION, ENHANCING WELL-BEING OF THE RAKYAT:
A PROMISE FULFILLED”

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I beg to move the Bill intituled “An Act to apply a sum from the Consolidated Fund for the service of the year 2013 and to appropriate that sum for the service of that year” be read a second time.

INTRODUCTION

I begin the 2013 Budget speech by reciting the holy kalimah Bismillahirrahmanirrahim and by reciting a verse from Surah Al-Baqarah, which was revealed in Madinah:

“And everyone has a direction to which he should turn, therefore hasten to (do) good works; wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together (for judgement); surely Allah has power over all things.”

1. I am here in this august House on a Friday evening to table the Government’s Budget, the fifth since holding office of the Minister of Finance Malaysia in 2008. Praise be on Allah SWT, for with His Blessings and through the collective efforts of my colleagues in the administration and the support of the members of Parliament, civil servants and all Malaysians, our beloved country has been successfully shielded from the adverse effects of the global financial crisis. In fact, the economy is on a sustainable growth trajectory towards transforming into a high-income and developed economy, while, the well-being of the rakyat continues to be improved.

2. Indeed, the 2013 Budget continues the excellent tradition of the Barisan Nasional in prospering the country and improving the well-being of the rakyat. This is a manifestation of a promise fulfilled. Since the last 55 years, Malaysians have placed their trust in the same government at every stage of the nation’s development. We thank you for your trust. We have never betrayed the people. Instead, we have repaid the trust given to us manifold.

3. This Government has never promised the moon, the stars or the galaxy. We have never painted a pretty picture based on wishful thinking. As a responsible Government, we continue to speak the truth even

though it may be unpleasant. We have never misled to the rakyat with tall tales. On the other hand, we have always offered solutions and provided good leadership to every problem faced by the rakyat.

4. It is proven beyond doubt that the Malaysian economy is centred on the rakyat. It is the outcome of the vision and aspiration of the rakyat. It is a testimony of the hard work of the rakyat. The economy is the contribution of the rakyat in urban and rural areas, professionals as well as blue-collar workers, farmers, labourers, farmers, smallholders, fishermen, teachers, lecturers and artistes. The economy is supported by civil servants and entrepreneurs. Above all, the economy is managed carefully and prudently by a Government which places the well-being of the rakyat as its ultimate objective. This is the formula for the success of Malaysia.

5. Managing a complex multiracial country like Malaysia is not easy. It requires sincerity and intelligence because Malaysians are a discerning lot. In fact, the rakyat has given the mandate to the same Government 12 times since 1959, indicating that this Government has done the right thing.

6. The trust that exists between the rakyat and the Government cannot be broken no matter how strong the lies. In this regard, the Budget that I am tabling is in appreciation of all Malaysians who have placed their trust in us all this while.

2012 ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND 2013 PROSPECTS

7. The Government remains committed to ensuring the nation's economic growth continues to flourish despite uncertainties and challenges in the global economy. The nation's strong economic fundamentals, supported by an accommodative monetary policy have placed the economy on the right path. In the first half of 2012, the economy expanded 5.1% mainly supported by robust private investment and consumption. In tandem with improved investor confidence in Malaysia as a major investment destination, net inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) amounted to RM13.6 billion.

8. For 2012, despite moderate global economic growth and trade, the Malaysian economy is estimated to expand strongly between 4.5% and 5%. Growth will be driven by private investment at 11.7% to RM127.9 billion. The performance far exceeds the total investment in 2009 at RM81 billion. The trend reflects the growing vibrancy in domestic investment, particularly with the implementation of projects under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP). This will support the construction sector to surge 15.5% in 2012 from 4.6% in 2011.

9. The strong domestic economic environment also boosted the encouraging performance of the stock market. This was reflected in the increase of the FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI to reach a record high of 1,654.11 points on 4 September 2012. Market capitalisation increased 44% from RM999 billion as at end-2009 to RM1.43 trillion on 4 September 2012. Per capita income increased to almost RM31,000 in 2012 compared with RM25,000 in 2009. The international reserves position remains strong at RM432.2 billion on 14 September 2012, sufficient to finance 9.5 months of retained imports and is 3.9 times the short-term external debt.

10. In 2013, based on the prospects of an improved global economy, the Malaysian economy is forecast to expand strongly between 4.5% and 5.5%. For the first time, the nation's nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to exceed RM1 trillion. The higher growth is supported by private investment and consumption at 13.3% and 5.7%, respectively. The construction sector is expected to increase 11.2% followed by the services sector at 5.6%.

2013 BUDGET ALLOCATION

11. The 2013 Budget will allocate RM251.6 billion for the implementation of development projects, programmes and measures, with focus on the well-being of the rakyat and national development. Of this amount, RM201.9 billion is for Operating Expenditure while RM49.7 billion, for Development Expenditure.

12. Under Operating Expenditure, RM58.6 billion is allocated for Emoluments and RM33.7 billion is allocated for Supplies and Services. Meanwhile, RM107.3 billion is allocated for Fixed Charges and Grants, while RM1.1 billion is provided for the Purchase of Assets. The remaining RM1.2 billion is for Other Expenditures.

13. As for Development Expenditure, RM30 billion is allocated to the economic sector for infrastructure, industrial, agriculture and rural development. A total of RM11.1 billion is allocated to the social sector including education and training, health, welfare, housing and community development. In addition, RM4.6 billion is allocated for the development of the Security Sector, RM2 billion for General Administration and RM2 billion for Contingencies.

14. In 2013, the Federal Government revenue collection is estimated at RM208.6 billion compared with RM207.2 billion in 2012. Taking into account the estimated revenue and expenditure, the Federal Government fiscal deficit will further decline to 4% of GDP in 2013 from 4.5% in 2012. This reflects the Government's commitment to continue reducing the fiscal deficit to a lower level.

2013 BUDGET FOCUS

15. The 2013 Budget will focus on improving the quality of life of the rakyat, ensuring sustainable economic growth, spending prudently and reducing the fiscal deficit with the overall objective of prioritising the well-being of the rakyat. The Government will ensure that the rakyat enjoys excellent services and obtains maximum benefits from the implementation of development projects and programmes. The 2013 Budget is, therefore, designed based on the theme "PROSPERING THE NATION, ENHANCING WELL-BEING OF THE RAKYAT: A PROMISE FULFILLED", with focus on five key areas.

FIRST FOCUS: BOOSTING INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

16. Malaysia's economic growth will continue to be driven by foreign and domestic direct investment. In the first half of 2012, private investment rose to RM75.3 billion compared with RM59.8 billion during the same period of 2011. This trend is expected to continue in 2013 with private investment increasing to RM148.4 billion.

17. The Government will continue to accelerate the implementation of the 12 National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs). In 2013, a sum of RM3 billion is allocated for the implementation of entry point projects (EPPs). This includes RM1.5 billion for agriculture projects such as oil palm, rubber, high-value herbs and paddy. A total of RM500 million will be allocated for the River of Life project for the beautification of the Klang River. Meanwhile, an additional RM300 million is provided for replacement of water pipelines and sewage to improve water supply and sewage system.

Promoting Domestic Investment

18. To encourage domestic investment and accelerate the participation of Malaysian companies in the global supply chain, the Government has established the Domestic Investment Strategic Fund worth RM1 billion under the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA). The fund aims to leverage outsourcing activities and acquisition of technology by Malaysian companies. Additionally, the Government has reintroduced the incentive for the acquisition of foreign companies and a special tax rate to encourage local service providers to merge into bigger entities.

Intensifying Small and Medium Enterprises

19. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have played an important role in supporting the nation's economic transformation. To accelerate the growth of SME and the expansion of industrial areas nationwide, a fund of RM1 billion will be provided under the SME Development Scheme to be managed by the SME Bank. The measure will facilitate SMEs' access to financing to further develop their businesses.

20. This is in line with the recently launched SME Masterplan (2012 – 2020), which will be the game-changer in accelerating SME growth through innovation and productivity. The Masterplan outlines the implementation of 32 initiatives including six high-impact programmes (HIP) with an allocation of RM30 million.

21. To further promote the halal industry, the Government is committed to developing high-impact halal products for export. In this regard, the SME Bank with the cooperation of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) will provide RM200 million to the Halal Industry Fund to finance the working capital of participating SMEs.

22. Currently, there are 1.5 million hawkers and small businesses operating traditionally, and without fixed income. Recognising their constraints, particularly in the event of injury, disability and death, the Government proposes a group insurance coverage scheme for hawkers and owners of small businesses registered with the Companies Commission of Malaysia. The scheme will provide maximum coverage of up to RM5,000. For the first time, the Government will finance this Scheme with an allocation of RM16 million a year.

23. In addition, Perbadanan Nasional Berhad (PNS) will introduce the Business in Transformation programme to support efforts to modernise the operations of hawkers and small businesses to higher standards and competitiveness through the licensing or franchising model. The programme will provide guidance and advisory services on new business concepts such as mobile shops, kiosks and online businesses. For this, PNS will provide soft loans to hawkers and small businesses of up to RM25,000 for licensees and RM500,000 for licensors.

Malaysia as Oil and Gas Hub

24. We are blessed with valuable mineral resources, such as oil and natural gas. The Government aims to transform Malaysia from a producer to a global integrated trading hub for oil and gas.

25. Therefore, the Government has undertaken several strategic measures to enhance the nation's capability, particularly in providing an ecosystem to support the development of the chain of refining, storage and trading. To support the participation of private operators in the development of the oil and gas industry, various special tax incentives and non-tax incentives have been provided. These include the cost of land acquisition and financial assistance as a tipping point for public-private partnership projects, 100% income tax exemption for a period of ten years, exemption of withholding tax and exemption of stamp duty.

26. For investment in the refinery activities on petroleum products, Investment Tax Allowance of 100% for the period of 10 years will be provided to qualified companies. In this regard, various investment totalling USD20 billion in oil and gas projects have been implemented in 2012. These projects include the PETRONAS Refinery and Petrochemical Integrated Development (RAPID), oil and gas storage Terminal in Johor, Regasification Plant in Melaka as well as oil and gas terminal in Sipitang, Sabah.

27. The Government also launched the Global Incentive for Trading (GIFT) programme in 2011 with tax incentive at the rate of 3%. In line with the global demand for liquefied natural gas (LNG) which is expected to reach 400 million tonnes a year in 2025, the GIFT programme will be enhanced with a 100% income tax

exemption on statutory income for the first 3 years of operations for LNG trading companies. Commodity trading approved under GIFT will be extended to include other commodities such as agriculture, refined raw materials, base minerals and chemicals.

Intensifying Tourism Sector

28. The tourism industry is one of the key economic growth sectors, contributing almost 12% to GDP. Total revenue generated from the tourism sector is estimated to increase to RM62 billion in 2012. In conjunction with Visit Malaysia Year 2013/2014, the Government has allocated RM358 million under development expenditure, an increase of 42%, to target 26.8 million tourist arrivals. In addition, for tour operators who bring in at least 750 foreign tourists or handle 1,500 local tourists a year, the Government proposes that the income tax exemption be extended for 3 years.

Enhancing Agricultural Activity

29. The Government continues to give priority to the agriculture sector to enhance the national income and ensure food security. For this, a sum of RM5.8 billion is allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry.

30. The Government will also allocate RM30 million for agricultural development programmes, including high-technology applications in fruit and vegetable production, increase the supply of high-quality seedlings, price stabilisation through direct selling from farms, establishment of fish markets for the rakyat as well as improving agricultural training institutions. The Government will also allocate RM75 million to increase the output of food and health products.

31. For the plantation subsector, RM432 million is allocated under the NKEA for oil palm replanting programmes. The initiative will increase the annual oil palm yield to 26.2 tonnes per hectare in 2020 compared with 21 tonnes per hectare currently. In addition, RM127 million is allocated for the development of high-value oleo derivatives to transform the downstream industry towards higher production of derivatives.

Sustaining Food Security

32. To ensure food security, existing paddy granaries will be strengthened through an integrated and systematic paddy management system. Additionally, four new paddy granaries will be developed and expanded in Kota Belud, Batang Lupar, Rompin and Pekan. Currently, the 389,000 hectares of cultivated paddy granaries are able to produce up to 1.8 million tonnes. With an expenditure of RM140 million, the four new paddy granaries with acreage of 19,000 hectares and involving 12,237 farmers are expected to produce 104 tonnes.

Safeguarding the Farmers and Fishermen

33. The Government appreciates the contribution of fishermen and will ensure that their socio-economic status and income are enhanced. Currently, the Government provides a living allowance of RM200 per month, benefiting 55,000 registered fishermen. The Government also provides an incentive ranging from RM0.10 to RM0.20 per kilogramme to encourage fish landings at licensed jetties nationwide.

34. The Government has introduced the Fishermen Insurance Scheme with a maximum coverage of RM100,000. To continue providing these benefits, the Government will allocate RM230 million in 2013 as an incentive for fish landing as well as payment of living allowances for the fishermen. In addition, the allocation of RM300 million provided in the 2012 Budget for the building and refurbishment of fishermen's houses are currently underway.

35. The Government will continue to provide subsidies and incentives amounting to RM2.4 billion to assist farmers in reducing cost of production. The assistance comprises subsidies and incentives for paddy production including subsidies on paddy price (RM480 million) and paddy fertilisers (RM465 million); incentives to increase paddy yield (RM80 million) and paddy production (RM563 million); and subsidies on price of rice (RM528 million) and high-quality paddy seeds (RM85 million).

36. In line with the Government's commitment to safeguard the rakyat's welfare, particularly paddy farmers, the Government will introduce for the first time a Paddy Takaful Coverage Scheme (SPTP). The scheme is expected to benefit 172,000 paddy farmers who own fields less than 10 hectares. Total compensation to be received by each farmer is estimated at RM13,000. The Government will initially allocate RM50 million for this scheme.

37. The Government will continue the AZAM Tani project which was introduced in 2011. The programme has successfully lifted 1,234 families out of poverty and increased their average income between RM200 and RM2,000 per month. Several participants of this programme have also successfully increased their income to more than RM10,000 per month. To further strengthen this initiative, RM41 million will be provided to benefit 6,730 participants.

Stimulating the Capital and Financial Markets

38. The Malaysian capital market has expanded rapidly despite uncertainties in the global economy. Malaysia also continues to dominate sukuk issuance accounting for 71% or RM171 billion of the total global sukuk issuance in the first seven months of 2012. This is proven by the single largest sukuk issuance by PLUS Berhad worth RM30.6 billion.

39. In addition, the fund management and unit trust industry registered a strong growth in the first half of 2012 with managed assets increasing to RM451.9 billion and a net asset value of RM277.8 billion.

40. In 2012, the domestic equity market registered a strong growth with Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) worth RM17.4 billion. This reflected a sharp increase of 162% compared with 2011. History was created when two out of the three largest global IPOs were raised domestically, namely Felda Global Ventures Holdings Berhad (FGVH) with an issuance of RM9.9 billion and IHH Healthcare Berhad with RM6.3 billion. In addition, ASTRO which will be listed in October 2012, is expected to be the largest issuance.

41. To further stimulate the capital and equity market, the Securities Commission (SC) will provide a framework on the issuance of AgroSukuk for companies engaged in the agriculture sector, following the successful listing of FGVH. Through instruments such as the AgroSukuk, capital can be raised to finance agricultural companies and agro-based industries. To encourage the issuance of AgroSukuk, the Government proposes that expenses for the issuance of AgroSukuk be given a double deduction for a period of four years effective from year of assessment 2012 to 2015.

42. Apart from institutional investors, the Government also encourages retail investors to participate in the capital market. For this purpose, the SC has formulated a framework for retail bond and sukuk issuances to enable investors to acquire stakes in the bond and sukuk markets. For a start, DanaInfra Nasional Berhad will issue retail bonds worth RM300 million by end-2012 to finance MRT development projects.

43. To encourage companies to issue retail bonds and retail sukuk, the Government proposes that additional expenses incurred in the issuance of retail bonds and retail sukuk be given a double deduction for a period of four years effective from year of assessment 2012 to 2015. At the same time, individual investors are also given stamp duty exemption on instruments relating to the transactions of retail bonds and retail sukuk.

44. To ensure an effective and holistic promotion of the Malaysian capital market internationally, the SC will establish a Capital Market Promotion Centre. The centre will adopt an integrated approach across

various segments in the capital market and provide consistent initiatives to position Malaysia as a centre of investment and fund raising.

45. The SC will introduce the Graduate Representative Programme to increase the supply of professionals to support growth of the capital market. The programme will be implemented in collaboration with the private sector to train 1,000 graduates to meet the needs of the securities and derivatives industry.

Promoting Business Trust

46. Business operations through trust entities have certain advantages, particularly in enhancing their ability to obtain financial resources based on assets owned. In this regard, the Government has amended the Capital Market and Services Act 2007 to provide an option for carrying out business operations through a new structure, known as a business trust.

47. In line with this, the Government proposes a business trust be given the same tax treatment as a company. To encourage the development of business trusts, it is proposed that the transfer of any business, asset and real property to a business trust be given stamp duty exemption and real property gains tax exemption at the early stage of the establishment of a business trust.

48. The Government has established Danajamin Nasional Berhad (Danajamin) to provide guarantee facilities to viable companies to obtain funds from the bond market at a reasonable cost. Danajamin has approved guarantees totalling RM9.3 billion to 30 companies, resulting in the issuance of bonds and sukuk worth RM4.2 billion. This has enabled companies to generate economic activities in various sectors, including real estate, infrastructure, plantation, oil and gas, construction, manufacturing and aviation.

49. To provide companies with greater access to the capital market, the Government will allocate an additional RM400 million to Danajamin for the next two years. The additional fund will multiply the issuance value between RM4 billion and RM6 billion.

50. The Government has also announced the establishment of the Capital Market Foundation as a concerted effort towards increasing the competency and capability of companies to compete in a more dynamic capital market. The Foundation focuses on three main areas, namely SME development; promotion and support of innovative products; and human capital development. For this, RM100 million will be provided to the Foundation through the Capital Market Development Fund under the SC.

51. As an initiative to promote Malaysia as an international financial hub and to attract FDI, the Government launched the Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) on 30 July 2012 with a gross development value of RM26 billion. TRX will provide new investment opportunities by connecting the business community with the global market. TRX is expected to attract 250 international financial services companies and offer 40,000 knowledge and skilled job opportunities.

Corporate Wakaf

52. To encourage major international financial institutions to make Kuala Lumpur a preferred investment centre, income tax exemption for 10 years for TRX-status companies, stamp duty exemption, industrial building allowance and accelerated capital allowance for TRX Marquee-status companies as well as tax exemption for property developers are being provided. The development of TRX is on schedule. Meanwhile, the realignment of existing utilities on the TRX site is well underway and is expected to be completed in October 2012.

53. The Government recognises the State Islamic Religious Council as the sole trustee for all wakaf and wakaf funds in respective states. Wakaf institutions in Malaysia not only focus on land development but also on corporate wakaf in the form of cash, shares and other financial instruments. In line with this, the Malaysian Wakaf Foundation under the Department of Awqaf, Zakat and Hajj (JAWHAR) will be responsible to formulate the Corporate Wakaf master plan, taking into consideration the State Islamic

Religious Council legislative structure. The master plan will be the platform for the development of Corporate Wakaf in Malaysia.

Developing Bumiputera Entrepreneurs

54. The Government is committed to ensuring Bumiputera companies are able to compete on a level playing field in acquiring ownership of large companies, creating high-income employment as well as investing in key economic sectors. In 2010, Bumiputera equity increased to 23% compared with 22% in 2008. One of the measures is to increase participation of Bumiputera companies in the first alignment of the MRT project. The participation of Bumiputera companies in high-impact projects such as MRT will further enhance the capability and expertise of local Bumiputera companies. A sum of RM9 billion or 43% of the total infrastructure cost of the MRT project has been allocated to Bumiputera companies.

55. Efforts will also be undertaken to assist Bumiputera SMEs to expand and increase their equity holdings in the economic sector. In line with this, the SME Bank will provide RM1 billion to the Bumiputera Financing Fund. The fund will assist local SMEs to finance the acquisition of GLC subsidiaries engaged in non-core activities. To date, two GLCs have identified their potential subsidiaries for divestment to Bumiputera investors.

56. The Government has also introduced a fund worth RM10 billion under the Working Capital Guarantee Scheme for SMEs to facilitate access to working capital. The scheme guarantees up to a maximum of RM2.5 million to qualified companies. Currently, RM900 million is still available for Bumiputera companies under this scheme. To attract more Bumiputera companies to benefit from this scheme, the Government will extend the duration of this scheme until 31 December 2013, expand this scheme to High-Performing Bumiputera (TERAS) companies and increase the companies' shareholders' fund eligibility from RM10 million to RM20 million.

57. Small-scale entrepreneurs, particularly Bumiputera entrepreneurs lack quick and easy access to loan facilities. With the establishment of Tabung Ekonomi Kumpulan Usaha Niaga (TEKUN), these entrepreneurs are capable of commencing and developing their businesses. To date, TEKUN has extended loans totalling RM2.24 billion to 224,175 entrepreneurs nationwide, including a total of RM34.5 million to 4,212 Malaysian-Indian entrepreneurs under Skim Pembangunan Usahawan Masyarakat India. In 2013, the Government provides an allocation of RM350 million to TEKUN including RM50 million to the Malaysian Indian community.

SECOND FOCUS: STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025

58. Since independence, the Government has promoted education as the main agenda of the nation. The Government is aware that investment in education and training is a pre-requisite for prosperity of the country and the well-being of the rakyat. In this respect, large allocations have been provided annually. In 2013, the allocation for education and training accounts for 21% of the total budget. However, the outcomes are not commensurate with the investment made. Thus, on 11 September 2012, the Ministry of Education launched the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 Preliminary Report to ensure the national education system is capable of optimising the potential of each Malaysian child.

59. In the 2013 Budget, a sum of RM38.7 billion is allocated to the Ministry of Education (MOE) for operating and development expenditure.

60. Measures to increase the competency and quality of teachers are critical to support the success of the education system. Thus, in addition to the allocation of RM38.7 billion to MOE, the Government will allocate another RM500 million to enhance teaching skills in core subjects such as Bahasa Malaysia, English, Science and Mathematics through the Higher Order Thinking Skills approach. The allocation includes the

establishment of an Education Delivery Unit to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the transformation plan.

61. In the 2012 Budget, the Government allocated RM1 billion under the Special Fund for the Building, Improvement and Maintenance of Schools, particularly to cater for immediate needs to refurbish school buildings, maintenance, purchase of school equipment and construction of additional blocks. I am pleased to announce an additional RM1 billion to this Special Fund. Of this amount, RM400 million will be channelled to national schools; RM100 million to national-type Chinese schools; RM100 million to national-type Tamil schools; RM100 million to mission schools; RM100 million to Government-assisted religious schools; RM100 million to boarding schools; and RM100 million to Maktab Rendah Sains MARA.

Strengthening the Role of Pre-Schools

62. In early childhood education, the quality of pre-school education is critical to equip children with basic education. For this, RM1.2 billion will be allocated for pre-school education to Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat, MOE, PERMATA and Department of National Unity and Integration. In addition, RM380 million will be allocated to the MOE for placement of kindergarten teachers.

63. High quality pre-school and childcare services are imperative to ensure children receive proper care while nurturing foster positive mental development. For this the Government proposes the following incentives:

First: Launching grant of RM10,000 to assist operators of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) private centres in opening new high quality pre-schools. It is estimated that 1,000 new private ECCE centres will benefit from this initiative;

Second: A double deduction on the allowance or subsidies provided to the employees and expenses for the maintenance of childcare centres be given to the employers;

Third: Income tax exemption for 5 years and industrial building allowance at the rate of 10% a year be given to operators of pre-school and private childcare centres; and

Fourth: Income tax exemption for 5 years and industrial building allowance at the rate of 10% a year be given to operators of private pre-schools.

64. Currently, there are many disabled children from low-income families who do not receive early education due to lack of pre-schools for disabled children (TASKA OKU). For this, the Government will implement a pilot project for TASKA OKU in six categories of disabled children, namely down syndrome, autism, blind or partially sighted, hearing and speaking disabilities, physical disability and learning difficulties.

Skills and Training

65. Moving on to the issue of knowledgeable, creative and innovative human capital, training programmes will be developed to hone new skills in line with future needs of industry in a high-income and developed economy. For this purpose, RM3.7 billion will be allocated in 2013 to train students in technical and vocational fields.

66. Every year about 180,000 students graduate with diplomas and degrees from institutions of higher learning. To assist unemployed graduates, the Government will launch the Graduate Employability Blueprint by end-2012. The Blueprint will focus on strengthening the employability of graduates. In this regard, the Government will establish the Graduate Employability Taskforce with an allocation of RM200 million.

67. The Government has implemented the 1Malaysia Training Scheme Programme, also known as SL1M, to increase employability of graduates through soft skills training and on-the-job-training in private companies through double deduction on expenses incurred by the companies. This incentive is effective from 1 June 2012 until 31 December 2016.
68. The Government will allocate RM440 million to the Skills Development Fund Corporation (PTPK), to provide loans for trainees to undergo skills training. This measure will benefit nearly 40,000 trainees undertaking the Malaysia Skill Certificate Level One to Five. The Government will allocate RM366 million to upgrade as well as purchase equipment for Industrial Training Institutes and National Youth Vocational Institutes (IKBN).
69. In line with the objective to transform the country's key industries towards high technology, innovation and high income, various skills training programmes will be implemented. Towards this, focus will be given to create a professional and talented workforce in selected industries, including oil and gas, shipping, ICT, creative and biotechnology. In 2013, about 5,000 trainees are expected to enrol in these programmes. Additionally, PETRONAS will utilise IKBN in Pengerang, Johor to train 300 youths for the oil and gas sector by end of 2012 to meet the needs of the RAPID project.
70. The Government is aware of the plight of poor Malaysian Indian students in the estates who do not achieve good results in examination and are unable to find jobs. In line with this, the Government will allocate RM50 million to train 3,200 Malaysian Indian students in the estates to equip them with skills in line with market demand. The training will be conducted by Industrial Training Institutes and colleges under the Dual National Training Scheme.
71. In ensuring that private sector workers remain healthy and productive to contribute to their companies and economic development, the issue of health must be given priority. In this regard, SOCSO will allocate RM200 million to enable its 1.4 million members to undertake free health screening in Government hospitals or SOCSO's panel clinics. The health screening is for all workers aged between 40 and 55 years to detect non-communicable diseases.

THIRD FOCUS: INCULCATING INNOVATION, INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY

Intellectual Property as Collateral

72. Efforts will also be undertaken to enable SMEs to further expand their businesses by using intellectual property rights (IPR) as a collateral to obtain financing. For this, a valuation model will be created to enable IPR to be valued and commercialised in the market as well as utilised as collateral to obtain financing from financial institutions. For this purpose, the following initiatives will be implemented: First: Establish an Intellectual Property Financing Fund scheme amounting to RM200 million. The scheme will be offered through Malaysian Debt Ventures Berhad. The Government will provide a 2% interest rate subsidy and guarantee of 50% through Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad; and

Second: Allocate RM19 million for training programmes for local intellectual property evaluators conducted by Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO) as well as create an intellectual property right market platform.

Research and Development

73. Research and Development (R&D) activities will continue to be emphasised. Various R&D findings and output of public research institutions have the potential to be commercialised. To support this effort, the Government will allocate RM600 million to five research universities to conduct high-impact research in strategic fields such as nanotechnology, automotive, biotechnology and aerospace.

74. To boost the commercialisation of R&D findings of public institutions, the Government proposes that the current tax incentives for the commercialisation of resource-based R&D findings be extended to

commercialisation of non-resource based findings which are products promoted under the Promotion of Investment Act 1986. The tax incentives are as follows:

First: The company which invests in its subsidiary company that undertakes the commercialisation of R&D findings be given a deduction equivalent to the total investment made in that subsidiary; and

Second: The subsidiary company that undertakes the commercialisation of R&D findings be given income tax exemption of 100% on the statutory income for a period of 10 years.

Intensifying Venture Capital Investment by Individual Investors

75. Young entrepreneurs have innovative ideas and products that can be promoted at the international level. However, they are constrained by limited financial resources. Therefore, as an alternative source of funding, it is crucial to have direct participation of an angel investor in the early stage of a business to ensure the success of the investment and the competitiveness of the venture company. In this respect, the Government proposes that a deduction equal to the amount of investment made by an angel investor in a venture company be allowed to be set off against all his income.

Encouraging Inclusive Innovation

76. To ensure inclusive development, the Government will continuously plan and implement programmes and activities centred on knowledge, creativity and innovation. Towards becoming a high-income and developed nation by 2020, innovation will be further strengthened and made pervasive in all sectors and segments of society. Through the 2013 Budget, initiatives will be undertaken by the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation with the collaboration of Agensi Inovasi Malaysia and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Green Technology Development

77. In the 2010 Budget, the Government established the Green Technology Financing Scheme (GTFS) with a fund of RM1.5 billion for three years ending 31 December 2012. The Fund enables companies which are producers and users of green technology to obtain soft loans, with the Government subsidising 2% of the interest rate and providing a guarantee of 60% on the amount of financing. To date, approximately RM800 million has been approved to 50 local companies. To further boost the production and utilisation of green technology-based products, the fund for GTFS will be increased by RM2 billion and the application period extended for another three years ending 31 December 2015.

FOURTH FOCUS: FISCAL CONSOLIDATION AND ENHANCING THE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

78. The Government is committed to ensuring the fiscal deficit continues to decline and achieve a balanced budget. In this respect, all ministries and agencies will ensure that development and operating allocations are spent on priority and important items to support the implementation of the national policies and programmes.

79. The Government will also ensure that the Federal Government debt will not exceed 55% of the GDP and fiscal deficit continues to decline to 3% by 2015. Among the measures taken to ensure sound public finance are enhancing revenue collection by strengthening the tax system, and ensuring all procurement and purchases by the Government are based on the value-for-money principle.

80. Apart from the transition from bulk subsidies to targeted subsidies, a review of Malaysia's taxation system will be continued to ensure the taxation system better reflects the household's financial position. The transition from income based taxation system to a more comprehensive and fair taxation system will eventually benefit the rakyat.

81. The measure will not be implemented hastily but through a thorough study and in an orderly manner. It will not affect the rakyat, particularly the medium and low-income groups as all the basic needs such as food, housing or public transport will always to be protected.

82. Implementation of the new tax structure is a national imperative to ensure the Government's finances remain strong for future generation. The Government will not shirk from taking the right action although it is challenging.

83. However, the Government will give the sufficient time to all parties to make the necessary adjustment. Public acceptance of this new initiative will be solicited through information programmes, education and extensive consultations.

84. In providing excellent services, civil servants must adopt a culture of productivity, creativity and innovation. The working culture must be swift, accurate and with integrity. The move will trigger a new paradigm and improve the rakyat's confidence in a more effective, efficient and responsive public service.

85. The Government has not forgotten the contribution of pensioners in providing excellent services for the country. In this regard, the Government will increase the minimum pension from RM720 to RM820 for pensioners who have served for at least 25 years. The adjustment will be effective from 1 January 2012. This measure will involve an additional allocation of RM60 million a year benefiting 50,371 pensioners including derivative pension recipients.

86. In appreciation of senior citizens, the Government proposes to reduce the processing fee of a 5-year passport by 50%, from RM300 to RM150. Meanwhile, processing fee for the 2-year passport will be reduced from RM100 to RM80. These reductions will also be extended to children aged 12 and below. The new rates will be effective from January 2013.

Improving the Malaysian Armed Forces Scheme of Service

87. To ensure that the Malaysian Armed Forces (ATM) has knowledgeable and highly skilled human capital, as well as to realise the vision and strategic direction of ATM in line with the current demand, the Government will improve the ATM service scheme. In this regard, recruitment to the armed forces has been improved, where the entry requirement for officers has been raised to Bachelor's Degree with Honours. For servicemen, minimum entry is raised to Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia and Diploma, based on the scope of tasks.

88. Taking into account the uniqueness of the armed forces, the Government will improve career advancement opportunities through time-based promotion for Privates to Lance Corporals, and for Lance Corporals to Corporals within a period of eight years for those who fulfil the necessary requirements and based on their performance. This will increase opportunities for career advancement as well as motivate the members of the armed forces. The improvement in scheme of service and career advancement in the armed forces involves an allocation of RM107 million benefiting 78,123 members.

89. In addition, the Government will provide a special incentive of RM200 per month to all military personnel totalling 125,708, effective from 1 January 2013. The measure will involve an allocation of RM301 million.

90. The Government appreciates the role of the military reserve force to complement and support ATM personnel. In appreciation of their contribution, the Government will revise the services allowance from RM4.00 per hour to RM6.00 for ordinary members, and from RM5.80 to RM7.80 for officers. This will involve 65,000 members of the military reserve force comprising Territorial Army Regiment (WATANIAH) as well as reserves in the navy and air force. This rate has already been in effect for RELA, JPAM and PVR.

91. The Government has not forgotten the commitment and dedication of our national heroes. The Government will provide a one-off RM1,000 to assist former members of the armed forces who have opted for early retirement; served less than 21 years; and did not receive any pension. The allocation of RM224

million will be equally shared by the Government and Armed Forces Fund Board which involves 224,000 former members of the armed forces.

92. The Government will introduce a Group Insurance Coverage Scheme to serving armed forces and police personnel involving an allocation of RM12 million. The scheme will provide a maximum insurance coverage up to RM15,000 to almost 242,000 armed forces and police personnel.

93. To date, the Government has borrowed RM6 billion to finance housing loans for civil servants which is managed by the Housing Loan Division (BPP), Ministry of Finance. As part of efforts to consolidate the fiscal deficit and to ease the Government's financial burden, BPP will be restructured. The Government will appoint panels from commercial banks to manage new housing loans, effective from January 2013. Civil servants will continue to enjoy the existing benefits and assistance, which will be further enhanced. Civil servants will still pay the 4% interest rate on housing loan repayment.

94. Currently, the processing fee for each housing loan application by civil servants is RM1 for every RM1,000 for first submission and RM2 for second submission. To ease the financial burden and facilitate loan approvals, the Government agrees to fix the processing fee at RM100 for each application regardless of the loan amount.

95. The Government will reduce the cost of living of trainees undergoing the pre-service courses at the first degree, diploma and certificate level. In this regard, the Government will increase the pre-service allowance for 31,135 trainees. The schemes of service involved are Education Services Officer, Environmental Health Assistant Officer, Medical Assistant Officer, Assistant Pharmacist, Radiographer, Nurse, Dental Nurse, Physiologist, Medical Laboratory Technologist, Dental Technologist, Community Nurse, General Medical Assistant and Dental Surgery Assistant. For this RM84.2 million is allocated.

FIFTH FOCUS: ENHANCING THE WELL-BEING OF THE RAKYAT

96. In addition, the Government will allocate RM6 billion in 2013 under the Private Financing Initiatives (PFI 2) to implement various projects and programmes to ensure the well-being of the rakyat and spur the nation's development. Among the projects identified include refurbishment and maintenance of schools and health clinics; housing projects; water tank projects; flood mitigation plans and provision of sports facilities.

Creating a Safe and Harmonious Neighbourhood

97. The Government has introduced measures to reduce the crime rate as one of the initiatives under the NKRA. Efforts to further reduce the crime rate will continue to be enhanced, with an allocation of RM591 million in 2013 to implement the following measures:

First: Increasing the number of Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM) personnel for patrolling and combating crime, upgrading infrastructure and providing modern equipment;

Second: Establishing a Motorcycle Patrolling Unit to monitor housing areas. For this purpose, the Government will allocate RM20 million to provide 1,000 motorcycles;

Third: Increasing the number of Police Volunteer Reserve (PVR) by an additional 10,000 officers involving an allocation of RM70 million to assist the police in combating crime; and

Fourth: Installing an additional 496 units of Closed Circuit Television or CCTV cameras in 25 local authorities in Peninsular, Sabah and Sarawak to prevent street crimes in urban areas.

98. The Government is aware of the duties and responsibilities of PDRM personnel. To all PDRM personnel, I hear your grievances on several anomalies that exist, particularly in the scheme of service for PDRM officers. The Government will never take these matters lightly. The Government has already

directed JPA to conduct a comprehensive study to enhance the career path of PDRM personnel. The study will be inclusive, consult all stakeholders and the issue will be addressed promptly.

99. The Government is committed to ensuring that every rakyat who is accused in a court receives a fair trial in accordance with their rights guaranteed by the Constitution. The Government has provided a launching grant of RM14 million to National Legal Aid Foundation for those who cannot afford legal representation. For 2013, an additional allocation of RM20 million is provided.

100. The involvement of the private sector and local communities is vital in ensuring Malaysia remains a safe nation. In this regard, the following initiatives will be implemented by the Government:

First: Supporting the role of resident associations to promote patrolling activities in neighbourhoods. For this, the Government will provide a launching grant of RM40 million for 4,025 resident associations registered under the Registry of Societies Malaysia, with each association receiving RM10,000;

Second: Enhancing the role of neighbourhood watch (rukun tetangga) to assist in safeguarding the neighbourhood. For this, the Government targets 6,500 neighbourhood watch locations (kawasan rukun tetangga – KRT) by 2013. The Government will allocate RM39 million to finance KRT activities;

Third: Providing uniforms to 300,000 active members of People's Volunteer Corp (RELA) with an allocation of RM90 million; and

Fourth: Total deduction on the expenses on the installation of security control equipment in the same year the equipment is purchased as compared to the current deduction of 8 years under the Accelerated Capital Allowance. The Government has agreed to extend this incentive to housing developers.

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission

101. The Government remains committed to combating corruption. In 2013, a sum of RM276 million is allocated to Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission for this cause. For this, the Government will increase an additional of 150 posts annually to reach a total of 5,000 personnel. The measure is expected to help the Government to improve Malaysia's ranking in the Corruption Perceptions Index.

Driving Community Transformation

102. The Government has launched the Rural Transformation Programme or RTP as a platform to strengthen the development of rural areas. For urban communities, I am pleased to announce the Urban Transformation Programme or UTP. A sum of RM200 million will be allocated for this purpose. To ensure strategic coordination between RTP and UTP, a National Strategic Coordination Unit will be established under the Ministry of Finance.

103. The Urban Transformation Programme is the Government's initiative in the development of urban community to ensure seamless public and private services that are efficient, fast and easily accessible. The Urban Transformation Centre (UTC) is implemented by refurbishing existing vacant Government buildings or optimising utilisation of buildings with minimum cost. For example, in the UTC, the rakyat will be able to apply for a passport within one hour; pay zakat, utilities and quit rent; buy textiles and books; and to undertake recreational activities such as futsal and gym. The UTC is unique in that it operates daily from 8.30 am to 10 pm, including weekends.

104. Under the UTP, the Government has launched two Urban Transformation Centres or UTCs, namely in Melaka and Kuala Lumpur. On average, the UTC KL receives 4,000 clients per day. The implementation of the UTC will be expanded nationwide in stages to six major locations, namely Alor Setar, Kuantan, Ipoh, Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu and Kuching.

Rural Transformation Programme

105. In rural areas, the Government has established the Rural Transformation Centre or RTC in Gopeng, Perak and Wakaf Che Yeh, Kelantan to provide integrated services, including the collection, processing and distribution of agricultural products; banking and insurance; business advisory services; skills and training; clinic; and commercial space. Given the benefits to the local community, the Government will expand the RTC to Melaka, Johor, Pahang and Sarawak. In addition, the Government will upgrade Medan Info Desa to Mini-RTCs nationwide.

Development for Rural Areas and Orang Asli Community

106. Rural areas will continue to be developed to reduce the disparity between urban and rural areas. In 2013, a sum of RM4.5 billion will be allocated to implement various rural infrastructure development projects including :

First: Providing RM1.2 billion to develop 441 kilometres rural roads and village link road projects to benefit 220,000 villagers;

Second: Providing RM1.6 billion for rural utility infrastructure projects which involves water supply to 24,000 houses and electricity supply to 19,000 houses;

Third: Providing RM137 million to finance Program Desa Lestari involving 29 villages nationwide and benefiting 38,000 villagers. Major programmes include upgrading of food and marine product processing plants, construction of new jetties, marketing centres and tourism complexes as well as organising recreational and homestay activities;

Fourth: Providing RM88 million to implement economic development programmes and water supply projects for the Orang Asli community; and

Fifth: Providing RM100 million to supply 40,000 water tanks for rainwater harvesting, particularly in the interiors of Sabah and Sarawak.

Health as the Essence to Well-Being

107. The Government will continue to ensure the rakyat enjoys good health services. For 2013, the Government will allocate RM19.3 billion for operating expenditure and development expenditure.

108. The launching of 1Malaysia clinics has received overwhelming response and benefited local communities in reducing treatment cost and facilitating health services access to treatment. The Government will allocate RM20 million for an additional 70 new 1Malaysia clinics in 2013. 1Malaysia clinics will now provide blood test services which include cholesterol and glucose tests as well as urine tests. In addition, RM100 million is allocated to upgrade 350 clinics nationwide as well as to provide an additional 150 dialysis machines in Government haemodialysis centres across the country

Development of Women, Family and Community

109. Women play an important role in raising happy families as well as contributing towards economic development. For this, the Government allocates RM50 million to support the women's dual roles by implementing the following measures:

First: A total of 500 women will be trained as board members under the Women Directors' Programme;

Second: The Single Mothers Skills Incubator Programme (I-KIT) will be improved to provide advisory services and training for single mothers in entrepreneurship;

Third: Get Malaysian Business Online Programme (GMBO) to assist 50,000 small entrepreneurs, particularly women to promote their businesses by increasing their sales online with a grant of RM1,000. SKMM will provide an allocation of RM50 million for this purpose; and

Forth: Allocation of RM25,000 for free mammogram examination for women, which is estimated to benefit 100,000 women aged 40 and above.

110. The Government cares for the less fortunate and low-income group, and will ensure that they are not marginalised in the nation's development. Therefore, the 1Malaysia Welfare Programme (KARISMA) under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development will be allocated RM1.2 billion comprising assistance programmes for senior citizens, children and disabled workers as well as for chronic illnesses.

111. The Government has launched 1AZAM or Akhiri Zaman Miskin programme to provide opportunities to generate income for the low-income group. The programmes under this initiative are Azam Kerja, Azam Tani, Azam Niaga, Azam Khidmat. For this, the Government allocates RM400 million which is expected to benefit 58,330 participants.

112. A part from this, the Government has provided two Anjung Singgah centres for senior citizens, street children and those who need temporary shelter prior to securing a job or permanent accommodation. For this, the Government will provide six additional Anjung Singgah centres. The Government will also establish five Anjung Kasih in Sibul, Miri, Temerloh, Seremban and Ipoh hospitals to provide temporary and comfortable accommodation for poor patients or family members who accompany the patients.

Youth and Sports

113. Sports is the best catalyst for national unity as it involves all segments of society. Sports personalities such as Lee Chong Wei, Nicol Anne David, Pandelega Rinong, Azizulhasni Awang and Muhamad Ziyad are among the highly regarded heroes and heroines in sports. The nation is proud of their success and achievements in the international arena. The Government places emphasis on continuous sports development and for this, an allocation RM738 million is provided for youth and sports development.

114. The Government will allocate RM15 million to prepare athletes for international sporting events, including the South East Asian Games and ASEAN Para Games in 2013 as well as the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games in 2014. In addition, a sum of RM50 million is allocated for four years, specifically in preparation for the 2016 Olympic Rio under the Road to Rio programme.

115. To encourage the development of cycling and badminton, the Government will build a covered velodrome in Seremban and a Badminton Academy in Bukit Kiara with an allocation of RM80 million.

116. In efforts to produce a young generation with towering personality and integrity as well as creative, innovative and competitive attributes, the Government will launch the Y-Creative Programme involving youth societies nationwide. The Government will also organise the Putrajaya Youth Festival, which will be the largest youth gathering in Malaysia, in conjunction with 2013 as the National Volunteer Year.

117. To assist young ICT entrepreneurs, a New Entrepreneur Foundation (NEF) will be established with an initial allocation of RM50 million. The NEF will be the platform to provide training and guidance programmes.

118. In addition, a Young Entrepreneurs Fund will be established with an allocation of RM50 million by the SME Bank. The soft loans, aimed at youths aged 30 and below, offers a 2% interest rate subsidy for loans up to RM100,000 with a 7-year repayment period.

119. The Government recognises the role of youths in aspiring Malaysia's development. In this regard, the Government will launch the 1Malaysia For Youth Blue Ocean Competition (1M4U) to enable the youth to present creative and innovative ideas through competition at local, state and national levels. The best three ideas will be awarded funds from the 1Malaysia Volunteer Fund.

120. A majority of the 22% of Malaysians who use smartphones to surf the Internet are youths. To enable the youths to access the information highway, a special package will be introduced by the Government with the cooperation between the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (SKMM) and telecommunications companies. Through the Youth Communication Package, a one-off rebate of RM200 will be provided for the purchase of one unit of 3G smartphone from authorised dealers. The initiative is for youths aged between 21 to 30 years with a monthly income of RM3,000 and below. A sum of RM300 million is allocated benefiting 1.5 million youths.

Recognising Artistes

121. Tapping on the role of artistes in the nation's development, we acknowledge that the nation's progress is not solely measured in terms of per capita income and economic growth. It is also measured through several dimensions. The artistes play an important role in enhancing national culture. In appreciating their role, the Government will provide RM6 million for activities and administration expenses to all registered associations.

Expanding Urban Public Transport Network

122. An efficient public transport system, is crucial for development of the community. Following the successful implementation of RapidKL and Rapid Penang, the Government will launch RapidKuantan on 1 December 2012 to provide high-quality bus transport services in Kuantan, which will benefit the rakyat. Additionally, Syarikat Prasarana Negara Berhad is in the process of expanding its services to other locations such as Ipoh, Seremban, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu.

123. The Government is aware of the importance of transport for the public, especially those who live and work in major towns. Currently, the disabled, retirees and students enjoy a 50% discount on KTM Komuter fares. In this regard, I am happy to announce that the Government will extend the discount to all Malaysians with a monthly income of RM3,000 and below and who travel by KTM Komuter.

Housing for Rakyat

124. The Government acknowledges that comfortable and affordable housing is the most important basic necessity for the rakyat. The Government is committed in ensuring that the rakyat has the opportunity to own a house. This is not only an economic imperative, but also a moral imperative for a responsible Government. Therefore, the Government will make affordable housing a continuous priority. I am happy to announce that the Government will allocate RM1.9 billion to build 123,000 affordable housing units in strategic locations in 2013. The initiative will be implemented by PR1MA, Syarikat Perumahan Nasional Berhad (SPNB) and Jabatan Perumahan Negara.

125. A total of RM500 million will be spent by PR1MA to build 80,000 houses in major locations nationwide with the selling price ranging between RM100,000 and RM400,000 per unit. Among the locations are Kuala Lumpur, Shah Alam, Johor Bahru, Seremban and Kuantan.

126. In addition, PR1MA will provide the Housing Facilitation Fund totalling RM500 million to build houses in collaboration with private housing developers. The house prices under this programme will be 20% lower than the market price and distributed through an open balloting system.

127. Meanwhile RM320 million will be allocated through SPNB to build 22,855 residential units including low and medium-cost apartments, Rumah Mesra Rakyat and Rumah Mampu Milik. SPNB's housing projects, which will be implemented immediately, include the construction of 1,855 medium-cost apartment units with a built-up area of 850 square feet in Shah Alam and Sungai Buloh. These units will be sold at about RM120,000 to RM220,000 per unit.

128. With regard to Rumah Mesra Rakyat programme, SPNB will build a total of 21,000 houses in 2013. Under this programme, SPNB will construct houses priced at RM65,000 per unit with a subsidy of RM20,000 as well as a 2% subsidy on interest rate.

129. In addition, a sum of RM543 million will be provided to Jabatan Perumahan Negara for the implementation of 45 projects under the Rakyat Housing Programme (PPR) involving 20,454 units which will be constructed through the Industrialised Building System (IBS). These units of houses will be sold at a price between RM30,000 and RM40,000 per unit, much lower than the market price of about RM120,000 per unit. The Government will also allocate 20% of the PPR houses to public sector employees and 1% to the disabled.

130. To enable more Malaysian own their first residential property, My First Home Scheme, which was launched under the previous Budget, will be improved by increasing the income limit for individual loans from RM3,000 to RM5,000 per month or joint loans of husband and wife of up to RM10,000 per month. In addition, the requirement for a savings record equivalent to three months instalment and minimum employment of six months will be abolished.

131. In the 2009 Budget, the Government had given a 50% stamp duty exemption on the instrument of transfer agreements and loan agreements for the purchase of the first residential property of up to RM350,000. The Government proposes that the stamp duty exemption is extended to 31 December 2014 with the price limit on residential properties raised to RM400,000.

Revision of Real Property Gain Tax

132. The limited supply of real property especially in urban areas has provided opportunities for speculative activities. Therefore, the Government proposes the real property gains tax (RPGT) from the disposal of properties made within a period not exceeding 2 years from the date of purchase will be taxed at the rate of between 15% and 10% of disposal of property within a period of 2 to 5 years. For property disposed after 5 years from the date of acquisition, RPGT is not applicable. In addition, gains from the disposal of one residential property once in a lifetime and disposal of properties based on love and affection between husband and wife, parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren are exempted from RPGT.

Tax Incentive for Revival of Abandoned Housing Projects

133. Furthermore, in 2013 the Government will allocate RM100 million to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to revive 30 abandoned housing projects. In addition, to encourage the involvement of the private sector, the Government will provide tax incentives as follows:

First: Banking institutions be given tax exemption on interest income received from the rescuing contractor/developer;

Second: Rescuing developer be given a double deduction on interest paid and all direct costs incurred in obtaining loans;

Third: Rescuing contractor be given stamp duty exemption on all instruments executed for the purpose of transfer of land or houses and loan agreements to finance the cost of revival; and

Fourth: Original house buyer in the abandoned project be given stamp duty exemption on all instruments executed for the purpose of obtaining additional finance and the transfer of the house.

Assistance and Incentives

Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M)

134. This is a people's Government, from the rakyat to the rakyat. The prosperity of the nation and the well-being of the rakyat is our ultimate objective. The Government will not take any action that will jeopardise the future of the people. Others make empty promises; offer free goods and debts that need not be repaid; and promise the moon and the heavens just to gain power. However, as the Minister of Finance, I will not hide the truth though it may be painful. In short, this Government will not mislead the rakyat.

135. In this respect, the Government is currently undertaking a subsidy rationalisation initiative and gradually shift the provision of the bulk of subsidies that lead to leakages, and benefit the high-income group, to targeted subsidies under this principle. In reality, subsidies continue to be given to groups that truly need the subsidies. If the Government continues to provide the bulk of subsidies, it will adversely affect the financial position of the country, and causing the rakyat to bear the consequences, as has been in other countries. As a responsible Government, we will never allow this to occur.

136. In line with the move towards targeted subsidy, the Government is committed in ensuring every segment of the society is able to enjoy the wealth of the nation. This can only occur if the economy continues to record sustainable growth and the nation is able to generate income, I am glad to announce the distribution of Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M 2.0). The criteria remains the same, where the head of the household earning less than RM3,000 is eligible for the assistance. In addition, I am pleased to announce that this assistance will be extended to single unmarried individuals aged 21 and above and earning not more than RM2,000 a month. This assistance amounts to RM250.

137. As the matter of fact, the assistance to household and single unmarried individuals is not a populist move, but the reflection of a Government that is responsible and capable of managing the nation's finance prudently. This will benefit 4.3 million households and 2.7 million single unmarried individuals and involve an allocation of RM3 billion. It will be paid effective January 2013. To facilitate implementation, existing BR1M recipients are not required to register for the second time, while new applicants may register commencing November 2012 via online or at the counters of State Development Offices, District Offices and Inland Revenue Board (LHDN) offices nationwide.

138. Moderate intake of sugar is acceptable. However, if taken excessively, it may be harmful. To date, about 2.6 million suffer from diabetes. In this regard, the Government propose to reduce the subsidy on sugar by RM0.20 per kilogramme, effective from 29 September 2012. The Government urges the business community not to burden the rakyat by increasing the price of sugar but instead reduce the content of sugar in food and beverage.

139. I want to stress that the Government is still subsidising RM0.34 per kilogramme on sugar involving an expenditure of RM278 million. The subsidy reduction is supported by consumer association and health practitioners.

140. Furthermore, to maintain the increasing price differential and consumption quota on cooking oil, the Government will provide an allocation of RM1.5 billion to stabilise the prices of cooking oil in the market.

Price Uniformity Scheme

141. Generally, prices of essential goods in Sabah and Sarawak are higher compared with Peninsular Malaysia due to the high cause of delivery and distribution. To reduce the costs and prices of goods, the Government has introduced various initiatives, including the price uniformity programme, provision of transport subsidy as well as opening Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia (KR1M). For this, the Government will allocate RM386 million to ensure the prices of essential goods in Sabah and Sarawak as well as in Labuan are sold at lower prices through the opening of 57 KR1M; and to bear the cost of delivering products from Peninsular Malaysia to Sabah, Sarawak and Labuan including the interior areas. For example, in Ba'kalalan, Sarawak, the price of a 14 per kg cooking gas cylinder is sold at RM70. With the price uniformity programme, the cooking gas can be purchased at only RM26.60 per cylinder.

142. In addition, to reduce the burden of the rakyat who commute daily by ferry from Labuan to Sabah and Sarawak, the Government will provide a 50% discount on ferry charges to all passengers. Furthermore, 50% discounts will also be provided on ferry charges for commercial vehicles that transport basic essential goods and construction materials to Labuan.

Facilitating Hajj Pilgrimage

143. It is once again the season for Muslims to head towards Baitullah. In the 2012 Budget, I announced that EPF contributors can make early registration to fulfil the 5th principle (Rukun Islam) through ring-fencing the Account 2 amounting RM1,300. Praise be on the Almighty, as to date, a total of 51,528 contributors have used this initiative. As an additional measure to assist the potential hajj pilgrims, I would like to announce that potential hajj pilgrims who contribute to the EPF, will now be allowed to withdraw their savings from Account 2 to meet hajj cost. The initiative is limited to jemaah muassasah with a maximum withdrawal of up to RM3,000.

Tax Revision on Individual Income and Cooperatives

144. The Government is concerned about the rising cost of living on the rakyat as well as their income tax liabilities. The Government has provided 20 individual tax reliefs and two tax rebates. With these tax reliefs and rebates, only 1.7 million persons pay tax compared to the overall workforce of 12 million.

145. In the transition process from the current tax system, based on income to a tax system that is fairer, the Government proposes that individual income tax rate be reduced by 1 percentage point for each grouped annual income tax exceeding RM2,500 to RM50,000. The measure will remove 170,000 taxpayers from paying tax as well as provide savings on their tax payment. As an example, unmarried young professional with a monthly income of RM5,000 will enjoy income tax savings up to RM425 per person.

146. Meanwhile, to continue spearheading the transformation of the cooperative movement, the Government proposes that cooperative income tax rate be reduced between 1 to 7 percentage points on income tax groups. With this, 7 million cooperative members will enjoy this benefit as an encouragement to increase entrepreneurial participation in business.

Easing the Burden of Bus Operators

147. The Government is concerned about the safety of children travelling by school buses, particularly buses in poor condition. These buses are in poor condition because the operators are unable to bear the rising cost of maintenance as most of the buses have exceeded their economic life span. For this, the Government proposes school bus operators to be given, firstly, assistance of RM10,000 cash rebate and a 2% interest rate subsidy on full loans for the purchase of new buses to replace buses that have exceeded 25 years with new 12 to 18-seater buses. This loan scheme, managed by BSN, will be offered for a period of two years commencing 1 January 2013.

148. Secondly, provide insurance coverage in the event of accidents, total and permanent disability and death for all school children who travel by school buses with permits. This effort will benefit two million students with maximum coverage of RM100,000 and premium cost of RM40 million per year for a period of two years that will be regulated by Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD).

Reducing Students' Cost of Learning

149. The Government is very concerned about students' welfare, particularly those from low-income families. The Government continuous to provide special allocations to primary and secondary school students which include per capita grant, hostel meal assistance programme, Food Supplement Programme

(RMT), purchase of text books and assistance for payment of additional school fees. For this, RM2.6 billion will be allocated for 2013.

150. In the 2012 Budget, I announced Schooling Assistance of RM100 to all primary and secondary students. Towards easing the burden of the low and medium-income families, the Government will once again provide the Schooling Assistance of RM100 to all primary and secondary students. This assistance is expected to benefit 5.4 million students involving an allocation of RM540 million and will commence January 2013.

151. The Government will continue the 1Malaysia Book Voucher programme for all students in institutions of higher learning (IPT) and at pre-university level. I am pleased to announce that the value of the voucher will be increased from RM200 to RM250. The measure will involve an allocation of RM325 million and benefit 1.3 million students nationwide.

152. The Government is very concerned about the cost of higher education. To ease financial burden of parents, the Government proposes that the existing tax relief on the children's higher education amounting to RM4,000 per person be increased to RM6,000, commencing from year of assessment 2013. The measure reflects the Government's commitment and focus on investment to enhance the level of education of the young generation that will benefit the country in the future.

153. To encourage the savings habit for education, I am pleased to announce that the current relief of RM3,000 for savings in the National Education Savings Scheme (SSPN) will be increased to RM6,000.

154. According to the law, debts must be repaid. The PTPTN loan is a privilege, not a right. If the loan is not repaid, it denies the rights of future students to access financing. Therefore, to facilitate loan repayment process, the Government will introduce several incentives. First, repayment of full loan within a year upon this announcement effective from 1 October 2012 until 30 September 2013, a discount of 20% will be given on their loan.

155. Meanwhile, for those with consistent repayment of PTPTN loan in accordance to their repayment schedule, a 10% discount per annum on their repayment will be given effective from 1 October 2012. As we are aware, there are parties who propose to abolish the overall PTPTN debt. This action is deemed irresponsible. If abolished who shall bear the outstanding debt of PTPTN amounting to RM30 billion. Would it not be the rakyat who will be burdened? Is it an act of responsibility if we are the borrowers, but the rakyat are the ones who have to pay?

Broadband Programme for Urban Poor

156. The Government will establish 100 1Malaysia Internet Centres from 2013 to 2015 in suitable areas in the city such as PPR locations. The centres will be equipped with computer facilities and broadband services for daily usage and will enhance the socio-economic activities. For this, SKMM will provide an allocation of RM150 million.

Promoting Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR)

157. The Government hopes that the private sector, corporate bodies as well as Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) will play a bigger role in the development and the well-being of the rakyat through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). To support the Government's effort to intensify CSR activities, the following programmes will be implemented by GLCs and various agencies:

First: Felda will implement and complete new generation housing projects amounting to 20,000 units for a period of five years on 5,000 acres of land in Felda areas. The project will cost a sum of RM1.5 billion. In addition, Felda will allocate RM60 million to revive traditional village houses in the Felda areas. Felda will also spend RM100 million a year for education and skills training programme as well as scholarships for 5,000 new generation children from which 30% or 2,000 people are children outside the Felda scheme;

Second: The 1Malaysia Development Berhad Trust will allocate RM300 million to provide education grants and financial assistance to build rumah arau pre-school students in the interior of Sarawak, 1Malaysia Mobile Clinic and repair houses for the poor and needy; and

Third: Government-Linked Investment Companies (GLICs) and GLCs will allocate about RM500 for CSR in community development, scholarships, education, sports and environment.

158. No matter how good is a policy enacted by the Government, it will be meaningless without efficient and effective implementation. The Government is grateful to all civil servants who are a part of the Government administrative machinery in implementing policy regardless of whether they are in districts, local authorities, states or Federal Agencies.

159. The Government also takes this opportunity to acknowledge the role played by the Ministry of Finance as the implementor of the national fiscal policy, Bank Negara Malaysia, which is responsible for monetary policy and the Security Commission oversees the integrity of the domestic capital market.

160. Hence, as a token of the Government's appreciation, I am pleased to announce a bonus of one and a half months salary. As we know, of this total, half a month bonus was paid during the past Aidilfitri, another half month bonus given end-of December 2012, and January 2013, respectively. It is hoped that this bonus will reduce the burden on civil servants, especially families at the beginning of school year.

CONCLUSION

161. The new budget that I have tabled for 2013 is the last budget before the 13th General Election. This is among the series of budgets that will propel this beloved nation towards achieving the national vision.

162. With the permission of the Almighty, and the support of the rakyat, god willing we will witness six more budgets to be tabled by the Barisan Nasional Government before transforming Malaysia from middle to a high income and developed country.

163. As a party with the mandate, we urge the rakyat to evaluate critically and rationally each and every successful record of the Barisan Nasional. Over the last 55 years, the Barisan Nasional Government and the earlier Perikatan Government have created a better quality of life for the rakyat.

164. We are aware that there are parties requesting to be given a chance to form the next Government. In a democratic country, we understand that they too have their rights. It is the rakyat who ultimately decides who will be given the mandate through the ballot box.

165. The time has arrived when every rakyat will soon make a choice in determining their future as well as that of their children. An important question to ask in making that decision is whether life today is better than yesterday, and whether tomorrow gives hope that is full of possibilities and potential. If the answer is yes, please give the mandate to the present Government to further improve what we have today, without any hesitation.

166. We recognise that the Barisan Nasional Government is not without fault, but what differentiates us from others is that they do not have the courage to accept mistakes. On the other hand, they make excuses and to find fault in others.

167. Ultimately, parties that offer an alternative must also be evaluated on their merit. The rakyat knows them well. Among them, there are those who were trusted as leaders to manage the nation's wealth. Furthermore in many states they are heading the Government.

168. If today they make promises, the rakyat must ask why is this leadership, while in power, did not take any action. When they had the opportunity; and did not implement what they promised, what guarantee is there that they will fulfil promises when they are in power?

169. Wasn't it during the Asian financial crisis that the country was almost destroyed? And today, in the states that are administered by them, their manifestos contain only promises. Can they be trusted when in power?

170. This is contrary to the conduct of Barisan Nasional Government, when we make promises, we fulfil them. As a matter of fact, even before making promises, we are responsible in ensuring that we are capable of fulfilling them. In trying to win, they are willing to do anything but when they win all their promises will be forgotten.

171. According to Plato, 'The measure of a man is what he does with power'. There are parties who are willing to sacrifice everything simply for the sake of power. The Barisan Nasional Government is guided by "fastabiqul khairat" as written in Al-Quran that I had recited earlier, which is to do good. The parties on the other side are guided by the "fastabiqul fasad" that is they will not hesitate to do bad.

172. The Barisan Nasional Government fosters racial unity which is the basis for national stability. But other parties, however others who want to be in power are sowing seeds of conflict and hate. This Government has been accused of several wrongdoings according to their own whims and fancy.

173. Thus, I urge Malaysians to judge the Barisan Nasional Government on its merits. Please join my colleagues and I to fulfil our potential towards developing a country that we can be truly proud of. A country where the weak are protected, those in need get help, the strong protect, the young loved, the elderly are valued, those in need assisted, and those with potentials given opportunities.

174. Truly, we want Malaysia to be well known internationally, prosperous and peaceful. With His Blessings, and the support of the rakyat we will make it a reality. To You, Allah we submit.