

Khairy: Review commercial subsidies, too
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Sharing the opposition bench's longstanding position, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin yesterday called on the government to review production subsidies.

He said this should be done so that the burden of subsidy cuts will not only be shouldered by the rakyat.

Commenting on Tuesday's cut in fuel subsidy, which prompted pump prices for diesel and RON95 petrol to go up by 20 sen, he said that this includes natural gas subsidies for factories.

"This is important as the subsidy rationalisation programme must be shared by all parties, and not just involve subsidies for the rakyat," Utusan Malaysia reported him as saying.

The fuel subsidy cuts have prompted a container haulier to raise its fuel surcharge, while bus operators said they will not be able to continue operations unless fares go up.

Meanwhile, the Star reported that new homes are likely to cost 10 percent more following to fuel price hike as building materials are expected to be more expensive.

The Penang Master Builders and Building Materials Dealers Association expects transportation costs of building materials to go up from 10 to 20 percent while sand and cement is likely to be 5 to 10 percent more expensive.

Real Estate and Housing Developers Association of Malaysia president Michael Yam also told the daily that the fuel price hike would affect more than 100 types of businesses in the construction industry supply chain.

He added that the ongoing crackdown on illegal immigrants has also caused construction delays.

"The raids on construction sites have frightened even legitimate migrant workers who are staying away.

"This also happened in past raids (where) legitimate migrant workers simply did not turn up for work or delayed their return from their country until the storm blew

over," he was quoted as saying..

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