

## **I like to eat kangkung, says Najib**

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Prime Minister Najib Razak said that he was using kangkung (water spinach) as an example of how market forces determine food commodity prices.

He said certain quarters should not make fun of the matter after his remark on the vegetable turned into a subject of ridicule on the social media.

"I like to eat kangkung, you all like to eat kangkung. As such, I gave an example which everybody eats. If I use quail as an example, only certain people eat it.

"The example should not be ridiculed by anybody because I gave the example on the principle of supply and demand which decide the prices of some of the food commodities which are not subject to price controls," he said.

The prime minister has also ordered the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry to be more firm with traders arbitrarily raising prices of goods.

He said this was to ensure traders were more ethical in carrying out their commercial activities and at the same time help the people.

"I have ordered the ministry to use existing laws against any trader who announce prices or charges which are too high merely to get more profit (profiteering).

"This is one way how we can help reduce the prices for consumers, particularly prices hiked up by unethical traders out to take advantage of the current situation," he said at a 'Dinner with the Prime Minister' organised by the Malaysian Indian Muslim Congress last night.

He also urged consumers to be more proactive by reporting to the authorities if they detect traders who deliberately raised prices.

Apart from this, Najib said he and his deputy Muhyiddin Yassin themselves would go to the ground to check on the prices more closely.

According to Najib, he would also take the opportunity to promote shops offering reasonable prices.

"And we will advertise or inform all parties that these are the shops that should be frequented by the public," he said.

Price of teh tarik to stay

Meanwhile, Najib praised the action of traders under the Malaysian Muslim Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association (Presma), who, he said, were more responsible in ensuring the prices of food and drinks were not raised, so as not to burden consumers.

"Its president (Noorul Hassan Saul Hameed) said shops under Presma or its members are truly responsible.

"Despite the increases in the prices of sweetened milk and sugar, he gave his assurance to me that the price of 'teh tarik' will not be raised.

"This is an example very responsible trading whereby they do not take advantage or exploit the situation as compared to those quarters who give a myriad of excuses to raise prices," he said.

In his speech, Najib announced an allocation of RM1 million to enable Koperasi Kimma Bhd (KopKimma) to open an Al-Rahnu branch in the compound of Masjid India in Kuala Lumpur.

Najib said he had high regards for the efforts of KopKimma to open the branch to ensure the Indian Muslim community had an opportunity to seek micro-credit schemes to boost their standard of living.

"I view highly the effort of KopKimma under its chairman (Prof Dr) Mohd Harun Nizam for planning to open the first Al-Rahnu branch in the compound of the mosque soon.

"This will enable Indian Muslims in the country to get micro credit loans at a fairer and more reasonable rate compared to outlets which impose very high rates," he said.

