

## **Opposition also raises charges, says Najib**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Oct 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak took a swipe at the opposition state governments today, saying that even they found it necessary to raise charges imposed on the people.

Among others, he said that Penang has raised its development charges, water tariffs, and parking fees.

“We will do whatever is necessary for the people, but because we are in government, we cannot take the populist approach all the time. The reality is that we have to deliver.

“The opposition, they say all sorts of things but when they are in government, (the fees) go up anyway [...]

“So sometimes we have to increase. We have no choice. If not, you pay compensation. It’s like the toll,” he said when opening the Gerakan National Delegates’ Conference in Shah Alam today.

### **Deluge of toll rate hikes**

His speech comes following a deluge of toll rate hikes for intra-city highways around Kuala Lumpur and Selangor earlier this week.

He also revealed that the government is still paying RM580 million compensation for intercity highways this year alone.

Najib teased the delegates that if the toll rates were maintained, the government would have to pay compensation to the toll concessionaires, and that would leave less money for other things such as the Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) scheme.

“So you’d have to decide. There is always a trade-off because of limited funds. “Now the world is different, now that the price of oil has slumped,” he said.

Earlier during his policy speech, Gerakan president Mah Siew Keong had urged for BR1M payments to be increased, among improving other welfare schemes.

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