

## **PM vows to spend on higher education despite budget cuts**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Dec 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

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The government will still spend on higher education to ensure Malaysia has the human resources to compete internationally, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said.

This is despite the budget cut of about RM1.4 billion suffered by the Higher Education Ministry in Budget 2016.

Speaking at a student conference in Kuala Lumpur, he added that tertiary education fees in public institutions have not gone up under his watch because he believes education is key to development.

"University fees don't go up but the rest will have to. Tolls can go up, but university fees cannot," he said.

"Fees have not gone up since I was education minister. This is the single thing which price has not gone up. Even the price of teh tarik has risen," he said.

This comes after Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi this afternoon assured students that public varsities will not raise fees, despite the austerity measures.

Najib added that the government also made the tough decision to cut petrol subsidy so it can spend on other things, like higher education scholarships.

Also present at the conference tonight was Najib's wife Rosmah Mansor, Higher Education Minister Idris Jusoh, Pahang Menteri Besar Adnan Yaakob and Umno education bureau chairperson Ibrahim Abu Shah.

A total of 225 public and private university students attended the event organised by the Umno ducation bureau and Yayasan Minda, where Rosmah is a patron.

It is aimed at building leadership and problem-solving skills among students.

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Source: <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/322385>