

Gov't doing its best to help cost living, says Najib
MalaysiaKini.com
Dec 18th, 2015

The government is constantly trying to find ways to decrease the cost of living for the people, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said.

The increase of prices for certain services and goods could not be helped and can be explained, he added.

"I understand very well the issue of the cost of living for the rakyat.

"I want to say that the government is always working on finding ways to lighten the rakyat's burden.

"Yet, I need to explain the real reason why certain prices of goods and services have gone up," he said in a blog post today.

External factors are putting pressure on the country's economy, he explained, citing the falling oil prices globally.

He said this would have a significant impact on the government's income.

"When the global price of raw oil falls, the government's income is less.

"In this context, it is expected to be more than RM30 billion next year," he said.

This makes it difficult for the government to add subsidies and such to help with the cost of living, he pointed out.

He clarified the issue again by comparing the government's situation with the analogy of a person who had their source of income lessened, which would decrease that person's ability to spend on things.

"The same with the government; we are limited in our abilities when the country's income decreases," he said.

Some trying to confuse the masses

The depreciative value of the ringgit is also due to the falling oil prices, he said.

Investors will sell the ringgit to invest in countries which are not affected by the falling oil prices, he explained.

This caused the ringgit to nosedive in its value, which in turn caused imported goods to become more expensive.

"If you look at it, the trend of the ringgit is almost parallel with the trend of oil prices.

"Yet, there are some who are trying to confuse the masses about the real reason behind the increase in prices and the fall of the ringgit," he lamented.

These people try to place the entire blame of the government, he said, even though the government is trying to control the increasing prices of goods.

He gave the example of the recently-announced special discounts for public transports, and added that the government is examining other ways to lessen the rakyat's burden.

Prices of services and goods have been increasing of late, such as the fare for travel on the LRT, ERL, commuter, and tolls, as well as the hikes in electricity tariffs.

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