

Bad time to drill for more oil royalty, says Najib
MalaysiaKini.com
May 4th, 2016
Anne Muhammad

S'WAK POLLS Due to the fall in oil prices, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has said this is not the time to increase oil royalty payment to Sarawak.

"It is not the time to consider this issue as the country's revenue is at a critical stage and we have lost RM40 billion due to the fall in oil prices," he pointed out.

However, Najib said the government has proved its commitment to Sarawak through the Pan-Borneo Highway as well as approving a total of RM3.5 billion for the state's development.

"We still try to cater to Sarawak's needs in terms of development and many allocations outside of the budget that have been passed for Sarawak.

"Based on my visits, RM3.5 billion has been approved and millions of ringgit more will be given to Sarawak.

"The Pan-Borneo Highway is the best example of our commitment to Sarawak and it will be continued," he told a press conference in Kuching this afternoon.

Sarawak currently receives a five percent oil royalty.

In 2014, the Sarawak state assembly adopted a resolution demanding that the federal government increase the royalty to 20 percent.

Earlier today, PKR candidates for the Sarawak election had also raised the issue, describing it as "petroleum justice".

Urging the government to raise the royalty to 20 percent, the candidates claimed that the people of the state have been long shortchanged over the oil and gas resources extracted from our state.

Apart from PKR, Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah), in its seven demands said it will support the government if the oil royalty is raised to 20 percent.

Meanwhile, Najib urged BN candidates to fulfill their promises made to Sarawakians should they win in the election.

The premier said the government will monitor their promises and expressed hope that the promises will be turned into action accordingly.

Refuted claims GST will be increased

On another matter, Najib refuted claims that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) will be increased should BN win in the election.

Instead, the premier said such claims made by the opposition were nothing but lies and that the matter was never brought up at all.

“We’ve made our decision during our meetings and among the resolutions are that we reject the opposition’s claims that the GST rate will be increased if BN wins.

“These are baseless lies. There never were any discussions, from either the finance ministry or the cabinet to increase the rate in any circumstances.

“Such tactics were raised to incur the rakyat’s anger. I hope the rakyat won’t be misled with such false stories,” he said.

The DAP had claimed that the government will increase the GST rate to 10 percent from the current six percent should BN claim victory in the state polls this Saturday.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: <https://www.malysiakini.com/news/340217>