

## **Najib urges the poor to become Uber drivers**

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BUDGET 2017 Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has urged the poor to become ride-sharing taxi drivers, such as Uber.

"To assist the B40 group, especially BR1M recipients to generate additional income, the government will encourage their participation as ride-sharing drivers, such as Uber drivers, particularly those who own vehicles.

"Their income could reach up to RM1,500 per month for part-time drivers working between 10 to 40 hours per week and RM4,300 if more than 40 hours per week," Najib said when tabling Budget 2017 in Parliament today.

B40 refers to the bottom 40 percent of income earners.

Najib also announced measures to help the poor who do not have vehicles to become ride-sharing drivers.

"For those who do not own a vehicle, down-payment will be made using BR1M and a rebate of RM4,000 will be provided for the purchase of Proton Iriz cars," he said.

The move is unlikely to sit well with taxi drivers, who have complained that ride-sharing drivers have hurt their income.

There were also several cases of taxi drivers attacking ride-sharing drivers and damaging their vehicles.

However, Najib also announced measures to help taxi drivers in Budget 2017.

He announced a grant of RM5,000 to taxi drivers to purchase new vehicles and obtain individual taxi permits.

The allocation of RM60 million is expected to benefit 12,000 qualified taxi drivers who have ended their leasing contract with taxi companies.

He also announced an insurance scheme for them.

"The government will introduce Social Security Organisation (Socso) scheme to individual taxi drivers with a monthly income up to RM3,000, with a launching grant of RM60 million.

"Under this scheme, the taxi drivers are required to contribute between RM157 and RM443 per annum, which is only RM13.08 per month.

"Should an accident occur while working, they are eligible to claim from Socso," he said.

As for speculation that first-time car buyers will receive tax exemption, no such announcement materialised.

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