

PM Announces NKRA To Deal With Rising Cost Of Living
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PUTRAJAYA -- The cabinet decided to add another National Key Result Area (NKRA) to the list of six to make it seven altogether.

Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak said the new NKRA dealt with the rising cost of living.

The existing NKRAs are reducing crime rate, combating corruption, widening access to affordable and quality education, raising the living standard of the poor, improving infrastructure in rural areas and improving public transport in the medium term.

"The six NKRAs were decided nearly two years ago based on studies on what the people wished the government should do.

"At that time, there was no global rise in food prices, which is now affecting countries all over the world.

"In view of this phenomenon, which has also impacted the lives of Malaysians, the government feels that we should determine the type of response to help ease the people's burden," he told reporters after the first 1Malaysia Online Roundtable with experts in various fields at the Prime Minister's Office, here yesterday.

Najib said the government would leverage the expertise of Pemandu to assist the relevant ministries and agencies as well as the Cabinet Committee on Supply and Price headed by Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.

To this end, the prime minister said existing measures such as the price-control mechanism and subsidy for most essential items would continue.

"We have other initiatives such as the 1Malaysia Clinic which provides service to the people at the cost of RM1 and the 1Malaysia Shop, which we will expand nationwide," he said.

He also said that the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister, Noh Omar, was negotiating with poultry industry players to find ways to lower the prices of chicken.

The seventh NKRA, he said, covered not only food items but also other essentials, which would be given top priority because they had direct bearings to the people's well-being.

"We have started to implement it. We are now looking at the supply chain, how we can liberalise it, maybe by allowing imports to increase the supply in the market.

"We also want to see if we can utilise idle land for food production and look into the cost of other inputs such as livestock feed...whether we can find a cheaper alternative," he said, adding that all suggestions would be considered for the next budget.

He refuted claims that the decision to add the new NKRA was due to the coming general election.

"When we started the NKRA, it was not because of any election, it was because of what the rakyat wanted us to do. At that time this (rising cost) was not an issue, otherwise we would have made it as one of the NKRAs," he said.

(Bernama)

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