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# PM: Govt all out to help people

> But Budget 2017 must balance needs with national debt, says Najib

**BANGKOK:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said the government wants to extend as much assistance and benefits as possible to the people in the 2017 Budget and at the same time manage Malaysia's financial position in a responsible and prudent manner.

He said the government needed to be creative in overcoming the constraints it faced to enable it to continue helping the people.

"There are so many things we need to do but one has to realise that it has to be in the context of our affordability and also that we need to rein in or at least manage our debt and fiscal deficit in a prudent way," he told Malaysian media yesterday after attending the second Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) summit at the Foreign Ministry here.

The summit was earlier opened by Thai Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha.

Najib, who is also finance

minister, said Malaysia was faced with a scenario of low commodity prices across the board while some of the recovery in developed countries had not been strong enough.

He said some of the economic measures taken by the developed countries had affected emerging economies, including Malaysia.

"That is the kind of background we are facing and these are factors beyond our control," he said.

According to Najib, he would also have to see the government's achievements in terms of the financial goals and parameters that it had set for 2016.

The government, he said, also needed to take stock of the challenges the country was facing.

He said he would be having discussions with ministers and officers to look at their budget aspirations and whether the government could afford to accommodate them, apart from also considering the sectoral needs of



Najib with other world leaders at the second Asia Cooperation Dialogue summit in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday.

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the various ministries and studying various suggestions submitted by the people.

On his preparations for the

Budget, he said everything has been progressing well.

"My approach entails looking at the broad macro picture, looking at

the financial outlook as well as economic prospects, particularly for 2017 and beyond," he said.

- Bernama

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