

## **PM Invites Public To Join Roundtable On Budget 2012**

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 4 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in a blog posting on his [www.1malaysia.com.my](http://www.1malaysia.com.my) website Monday, invited members of the public to take part in roundtable discussions on Budget 2012 themed 'A Budget for Sustainable Growth'.

Najib said Malaysians could still give their inputs by joining the roundtable discussions which still have 13 more days to go.

In his blog entry, Najib said in the past two years of his administration, he had embarked on a more inclusive approach to policy development.

"One such example is in formulating the National Budget. For the 2010 and 2011 Budgets, I had sought public input by inviting all Malaysians to submit ideas and suggestions, through my blog, for consideration by the Ministry of Finance.

"In the 2011 Budget, you can see that through this exercise, the Government tabled some ideas - including the introduction of a minimum wage policy, financial assistance schemes for young adults and families, and investment in green technology - inspired by the input from the Malaysian public," he said. "This year, the formulation of the Budget must also take into consideration a global phenomenon: rising food and petrol cost. Rapid increase in the human population, coupled with a steady push by nations for development and industrialisation are driving up food and petrol consumption.

"At the same time, food and fuel producers are struggling to cope with the growing demands and the challenges of climate change on production. This is not our problem alone; many countries are in far worse condition, as more and more people fall into poverty," he added.

While the Government still heavily subsidised a number of essential items to ease the financial stress on the people, he said, it was not realistic to do so while striving for upward economic growth at the same time.

"Bear in mind also that we are working towards achieving a fully developed high-income nation status by 2020, with a per capita income of US\$15,000, and that we are working in a global economic environment that is still in a stage of recovery from the 2008 financial crisis," he added.

He also posed the following three questions for discussion at the roundtable:

1. What areas or segments of the Rakyat should the 2012 Budget look into that can ensure long-term growth and sustainability?
2. Should the Budget focus more on the welfare of the Rakyat or on economic development? Short-term or long-term gains?
3. How can the Government improve transparency and accountability in the budget implementation?

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