

**Government Mulling Extending SOCSO Benefits To Taxi Drivers – Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 1 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the government is considering a proposal to offer Social Security Organisation (SOCSO) benefits to taxi drivers.

He said the proposal was seen to be reasonable because there was no provision in the Socso scheme to cover self-employed Malaysians.

"The problem now is that SOCSO regulations restrict coverage to those classified as workers only. There is no provision for the self-employed.

"We are looking into this. Perhaps, we can make a decision soon. Until then, we are helping out, providing a set of tyres and insurance coverage like I announced recently," he said over the "Suara Kami 2012" (Our Voice 2012) programme on Astro Awani.

Najib also said that the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) had been instructed to hold a dialogue with representatives of taxi associations to work out a new model for the taxi service industry.

He said the new model was important to ensure that the taxi service in the country was more efficient and satisfactory to the public, considering that there were many weaknesses in the existing system.

"Secondly, we must take care of the welfare and interests of taxi drivers who are under pressure today ... I feel it is improper to retain the existing system," he said.

The "Suara Kami 2012" programme gathers the views and proposals from people of various backgrounds from around the country to improve their livelihood. The proponents of good ideas and proposals are selected to attend a programme at Astro with a special guest who can follow up and provide an explanation to the issues raised.

Asked how he made sure that no one was left out of national development, particularly in the transformation programmes he had initiated, Najib said the most effective tool was education.

He said education was important for the current and future generations to acquire knowledge and skills to undergo a major transformation in themselves and their lives.

"It is for this reason that I created the 1Malaysia concept which requires us to be inclusive. The effects of whatever we do must be felt by the people," he said.

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