

Final Standoff Between Kitingan Siblings In Sabah
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 12 (Bernama) -- The distribution of various government aids and the implementation of development packages for the targeted groups have given positive impact in helping them to deal with the rising cost of living, according to economic analyst Datuk Dr Noor Azlan Ghazali.

In fact, he said the aids, such as the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M), RM100 schooling aid, 1Malaysia Book Voucher, 1Malaysia Tyre Aid and the 1Malaysia Housing Project (PR1MA), had also helped the targeted groups to cover their expenses.

He said the structural change in economic model and policy implemented by the Barisan Nasional (BN) government, together with efforts taken to overcome issues related to the rising cost of living, had brought about positive impact towards having a better quality of life for the people.

"The rising cost of living is a problem faced by all economies of the world, including in developed countries, and it is a part of the evil of growth," he told Bernama.

However, he said efforts to overcome the problem should not be left to the government alone because the changes on individual lifestyle had also contributed to the rising cost of living.

Modern lifestyle in the era of information and communication technology has contributed to the rising demand for mobile phones, computers and high-speed Internet access like never before and hence, consumed quite a large proportion of the people's income.

What used to be a luxury item is now deemed a necessity and this will definitely affect their cost of living, Noor Azlan said.

Based on the response for the various aids given to the targeted groups, it was clear that most of the recipients were happy, but how long should the government continue to give such aids?

In this regard, Noor Azlan said the distribution of the various aids was one way to ensure that the vulnerable groups, especially the poor and the low-income earners, would be able to enjoy the aid and the country's economic growth.

"Malaysia is undergoing a rapid development and some of the people just could not cope with the economic growth," he said.

Noor Azlan, who is the head of economics and management cluster of the National Council of Professors, said the aids could also be deemed as a subsidy allocation in certain sectors that could be enjoyed directly by the people who needed it the most.

He said efforts done by the government emphasized mostly on developing comprehensive infrastructure and efficient public facilities, increasing the quality of life and household income of those low-income earners and managing sectoral economic development.

The recent Household Income Survey 2012 revealed that the average monthly household income in Malaysia had increased from RM4,025 in 2009 to RM5,000 in 2012 or by 7.2 per cent per annum.

The income of urban household had increased by 6.6 per cent a year from RM4,705 in 2009 to RM5,742 last year, while the income of rural household increased by 6.4 per cent from RM2,545 to RM3,080.

In response to the implementation of various initiatives under the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), he said the transformation initiatives were in line with the current economic changes.

He said the government was doing a good job in managing the economy and this could be seen in terms of physical development, infrastructure, health, education and the social dimension.

However, he said some sectors needed to be improved from time to time, such as the public delivery system, participation of private sector, the structure of the supply chain of goods and services, as well as the transportation system.

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