

**NKRA: Government's Efforts To Reduce Cost Of Living Produce Results - Najib  
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KUALA LUMPUR, April 28 (Bernama) -- The increasing cost of living is one of the main areas of focus of the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said efforts to minimise the cost-of-living hikes were specifically underlined in the seven National Key Result Areas (NKRA) under the Government Transformation Programme (GTP).

The prime minister said over the first five years of GTP implementation, which began in 2010, the government had set up 307 1Malaysia Clinics throughout the country, covering urban and rural areas.

"Today, I can report with satisfaction and relief that the health service offered to the people has received exceptional response and has seen more than 15.8 million cases registered for treatment, with a payment of only RM1.

"For example, Karupaya A/L Muthukanoo, from Pandamaran, Klang, who, in his feedback about the programme, said that the 1Malaysia Clinic was a blessing and a facility which he, as a Malaysian, can directly enjoy," Najib said when launching the 2014 GTP and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) Report in the capital, Tuesday night.

The prime minister said with the services provided by the 1Malaysia Clinic, thousands of patients especially in the cities, including Karupaya himself, no longer needed to worry about the constraints of time and money in getting basic medical treatment.

"For this, let us all be grateful, and congratulate the health workers and nurses at the 1Malaysia Clinic," he said.

Najib said under the NKRA, the government had introduced the 1Malaysia People's Aid or (BR1M).

"I understand that BR1M is now a hot topic of discussion. As such, let me take the opportunity tonight to correct the misconceptions of the aid.

"Actually, BR1M is a subsidy, given in the form of cash, directed at assisting the target group, which is the best way for Malaysia right now," he said.

The prime minister explained that the aid had been implemented in many countries in various forms and under different names, including education fund aid, health financial plan aid, welfare payment, and aid through food coupons.

In Indonesia, for instance, under the 'Keluarga Harapan' Programme, the people were given

cash assistance to alleviate their burden due to the rising cost of living resulting from the implementation of the petrol and diesel subsidy rationalisation programme in 2013.

A total of 3.2 million Indonesian households had benefited from the programme, which cost an estimated 700 billion rupiah, he said.

"The assistance in UK (United Kingdom) is through food stamps, using a special card for the purpose of buying food. Other countries also provided aid to their people, whether in the form of financial or non-financial assistance," he said.

Clearly, Najib said, the BR1M was not something strange, but had been practised in many developed countries in the world.

"It should be properly understood that BR1M is only a transitional measure in the process of fiscal consolidation to ensure that we really help the needy, compared to the bulk subsidy which was implemented before.

"In this context, let me share the story of Puan Dayah A/K Mamut, 41 years old, from the longhouse in Betong, Sarawak. She is a single mother who is now working as a security guard at a school and has four children aged between 11 and 20 years.

"Here, as a leader, I am happy to say that anyone can say what they like and think. But for individual citizens like Puan Dayah, BR1M has really helped in alleviating her burden to support her schooling children.

"Despite what has been said, at least the government has tried its best to provide direct assistance to seven million households and individuals like Puan Dayah, who need it, regardless of political background," he said.

At the same time, said the Prime Minister, since 2010, 161 1Malaysia People's Shops had been set up throughout the country.

Through the shops, Najib said 272 1Malaysia products were sold at a price 15 to 30 per cent cheaper than the normal market price.

Meanwhile, under the NKRA relating to Improving the Standard of Living for Low-Income Households, he said almost 170,000 poor people could now live more comfortably through the 1AZAM programme, which eradicates poverty and emphasises on self-development and financial skills.

"We are proud of the achievements of the 1AZAM programme, which has helped almost 65,000 families from the target group," he said.

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