

**Government Committed To Improve Policies On Reducing Living Cost - Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 9 (Bernama) -- The government continues to be committed to improve the policies related to reducing the cost of living that are being implemented besides introducing new ones to help the people, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

As such, the prime minister said, the government was always open to hear the views of various quarters.

"Addressing the cost of living is a top priority for every family and hence the government introduces various ways and approaches to reduce it.

"Maybe it is not comprehensive but we have made every efforts. Some of them are known and some are not, some directly and indirectly," he said when officiating the Pemikir Muda Malaysia round table discussion on cost of living in Bangi Saturday.

Citing the higher education sector as an example, he said there was already an element of government subsidy being enjoyed by students such as zero hike in tuition fees in the universities.

In fact, Najib said on the average, the government borne 90 per cent of the cost of higher education in the country while students only paid 10 per cent of the total cost.

"Even for the 10 per cent, the government is providing loan from the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) and some students are even given scholarships," he said.

He said in Malaysia, the democratisation of education or access to quality higher education is not dependent on one's financial capability but on the desire and determination of an individual to study.

He said this was unlike many other countries where the people could not afford to further their studies to higher levels due to the high cost of education.

"But in Malaysia, even those from poor families can set foot in universities as our policy believes in the potential of every human to the highest possible level.

Najib also touched on the health services provided by the government such as the 1Malaysia clinics and government hospitals in which charges on people seeking treatment were minimal.

He said the government also provided affordable houses to the people with a target of building one million units of affordable houses in five years, including those especially built for youths.

"We have the Youth Housing Scheme in which the government gives RM200 to 20,000 married youths for the first two years to reduce their monthly housing instalment and a 50 per cent exemption on stamp duty on their housing loan agreement," he said.

Najib said various other policies and measures introduced by the government covered various areas such as public transport and entrepreneur funding which could assist the people reduce the cost of living.

Also present at the ceremony were the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Malaysian Young Thinkers Youth Organisation president Mohd Rafiq Naizamohideen and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Noor Azlan Ghazali.

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