

World Economic Crisis Won't Affect Government's Agenda In Helping SMEs, Rural Communities – Najib

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PUTRAJAYA, Sept 3 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the world economic crisis will not affect the government's agenda in helping to develop the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the rural communities.

The prime minister said as the backbone of the economic development and activities in the country, SMEs' development would remain as the government's top priority.

"As a government we always give serious attention to the rural development agenda, which includes the development of small and medium entrepreneurs.

"Despite the world economic crisis, which to some extent is gripping the currency value and the national income, I'd like to assure you that rural development will continue to be among the highest priorities for the government," he said when opening the Rural Entrepreneur Carnival (KUD) 2015, here today.

Also present was Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

The five-day carnival beginning yesterday at Precinct 3, here, is participated by 700 entrepreneurs and 61 exhibitors.

With the target of providing 9.5 million jobs by 2020, Najib said the government had planned various programmes including the provision of equity financing loan, totalling RM375 million, for the period of five years by SME Bank and private investors.

Najib also suggested that small and medium entrepreneurs strived to bring their products and services direct to the buyer to get maximum profits.

Besides bringing the products to the market physically, he said the ministry or relevant parties also needed to think of a way to boost products sales with most of the revenue being returned to the entrepreneurs.

"We must bring the market closer to the producer either physically like today's KUD or the products are sold and a large percentage of the income flows into the hands of the entrepreneurs," he said.

The prime minister also wanted the small and medium entrepreneurs to challenge themselves into venturing new business opportunities and avoiding the 'wage earner' attitude.

Najib said if they ventured into a business which had been involved by many, he feared the income would be small, flat and more worrying the cost of doing business exceeded the

income.

"This is a must-have in society, those who see the future as not just in wage earning concept, but feel more challenged to generate jobs, be more creative and innovative in their fields of endeavour," he said.

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