

**Optimise Government Expenditure – Najib
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PUTRAJAYA, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak wants civil service administrators and staff to optimise government expenditure rather than resort to austerity measures.

In his address at the first monthly assembly this year for the Prime Minister's Department here, today, he urged the workforce to apply creative thinking and innovation to enhance productivity.

He stressed both processes must be given priority in the government administration to offset external factors that Malaysia has no control over.

"Optimising the expenditure does not mean austerity measures such as making cuts here and there, but ensuring that every ringgit is stretched to its fullest in benefit and effectiveness.

"Aside from that, we can also increase our effort, which does not entail merely working hard but using our minds to think creatively and innovatively to improve productivity. As I have always stressed, give me a solution," he said.

Also present were Ministers and Deputy Ministers in the Prime Minister's Department, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa and Public Service Department director general Tan Sri Mohamad Zabidi Zainal.

Najib disclosed that he was also planning to set up a small group with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and the chief secretary to resolve the issue of delayed projects.

"We will call the agencies or ministries concerned to find out what caused the projects to be delayed.

"We will see whether the delays had to do with processes or complications. I want the Implementation Coordination Unit as the secretariat to identify certain areas that could be given emphasis," he said.

He also called to mind the 'People First, Performance Now' and 'people's economy' agenda.

He said while the people do comprehend that the current economic situation is dictated by external forces, they are also hopeful that every government project and programme would still be implemented.

"Let's move on. We have a big agenda, for the country and people and for our mutual well-being.

"As for the sensitive issues, we will find a solution. We cannot let them remain like a thorn in the flesh that could lead to problems in terms of our security and relationship with one another," he said.

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