

**GST Exemption on Prepaid Card Reloads Maintained Next Year - Najib
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PEKAN, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today announced that the Goods and Service Tax (GST) exemption on prepaid card reloads will be maintained for next year.

Najib, who is also Finance Minister, said the measure was taken to ease the burden of the people as many mobile phone users, especially the youth depended on the prepaid telecommunications services (prepaid card).

He announced this during a media conference after a visit to Pekan GiatMara Centre in Bandar Peramu here.

The government under the GST improvement measures at the end of last year had excluded GST charges on prepaid added value phone cards, effective Jan 1 until Dec 31 this year.

Meanwhile Najib denied that his busy schedule today had to do with the 14th general election.

"No...no...I return to Pekan today for the purpose of discharging my duty as the Member of Parliament, to review the effectiveness of government policies and programmes and whether they reach the target groups.

"I can see today the programmes implemented by the government really can change the living conditions of the people in Pekan and also throughout the country such as projects to build houses to address urban poverty, for instance," said Najib, who served as Pekan MP since 1976.

He had a hectic schedule today, attending nine programmes from as early as 10am with the last one at 7.30 pm, namely the Pahang Chinese Association dinner at Hotel Zenith, Kuantan.

In another development, Najib said the crisis in Aleppo, Syria needed a political solution, which if unabated would leave a bad impact on the people.

"We are really sad about the events in Aleppo, very heart wrenching not only among Muslims but also non Muslims. It is a terrible humanitarian crisis," he said.

"These is no winning side in this crisis, only those who will be adversely affected by the conflict in Syria," he said, adding that the western powers should also think of ways to solve the conflict.

On his visit to Pekan GiatMara Centre, Najib hoped the relevant institutions could provide culinary courses and, for which, he was willing to provide additional equipment and supplies.

He said educational institutions such as the GiatMara Centre was important as it could develop skills and provide a more secure future to the course participants.

Six areas of training are provided in Pekan GiatMara Pekan, namely Pattern Cutting and Garment Production, Fashion Drawing and Design, Hair Styling and Beauty Therapy, Automotive Technology, Electrical Wiring as well as Fashion and Dressmaking.

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