

**Dzulkefly: Hello, where are the 1.8 million jobs?**

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**Amanah leader points to apparent conflict between Bank Negara's report that youth unemployment rate reached 10.7% in 2015 and PM's claim that 1.8 million jobs were created between 2010 and 2016.**

KUALA LUMPUR: Bank Negara Malaysia's report on unemployment and the prime minister's assertion on the creation of jobs are in conflict, Amanah strategy director Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said today.

Prime Minister Najib Razak said on March 22 that the National Transformation Programme (NTP) had created 1.8 million jobs between 2010 and 2016.

In his keynote address at the 2017 Global Transformation Forum here, Najib also said, through the NTP, no Malaysian would get left behind and that the needs of all people were being met.

In its Annual Report 2016, Bank Negara revealed that the youth unemployment rate in Malaysia reached 10.7% in 2015, more than three times higher than the country's unemployment rate of 3.1%.

The central bank noted that 61% of the total unemployed workers were youths, despite only making up a third of the labour force. It said youths with tertiary education were the highest among the unemployed – at 15.3%.

The data revealed that the high unemployment rate was recorded among the population aged 20-24 years, that is 42% in 2015, followed by those aged 25-29 years (20.4%) and those aged 15-19 years (19%).

In 2015, Bank Negara said, the youth unemployment rate increased by 1.2 percentage points from an estimated 9.5% to 10.7%, while the national unemployment rate increased by only 0.2 percentage points (2.9% to 3.1%) during the same period.

Mocking the prime minister, Dr Dzulkefly said: "He seems oblivious of the actual perennial problem of youth unemployment.

"So what is happening Mr Prime Minister."

He said Najib's announcement that 'no Malaysian gets left behind' rang hollow in the wake of the Bank Negara report.

“This is indeed alarming and unsettling, to say the least. Its direct impact on the rise of social problems, namely (youth) involvement in drugs and criminal activities, would be the visible consequences.

“The overall well-being of society needs to be secured through increasing social and welfare programmes to assist this critical group,” the Amanah leader said.

He said there were many reasons for youth unemployment, including an uneven growth between job creation and job-seekers and a mismatch in skillsets between employment demand and supply.

But, he charged, not much had been done to address these problems.

Saying youth unemployment and underemployment were still pernicious, Dzulkefly added: “Sorry PM, you failed!”

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