

Najib Chairs Roundtable Dialogue To Gather Inputs, Ideas On Country's Economic Issues

PUTRAJAYA, March 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today met key industry players and business associations in a roundtable economic dialogue to gather feedback, inputs and ideas on the country's economic issues.

Najib, who is also Finance Minister, said he wanted to personally listen and take on board their views in order for the government to resolve the issues.

"We met and discussed current issues related to government policies, not only for the short-term but also in the long-term towards the National Transformation 2050 which had set a goal for Malaysia to become a top 20 country in the world by the year 2050," he told reporters after the dialogue.

The prime minister said the focus should be on the high cost of living and inflation, which was the general complaint among the people.

Despite such complaints, Najib pointed out that a recent survey revealed that Kuala Lumpur was the cheapest city in ASEAN.

He also pointed out that Malaysia's economic fundamentals were good, with Gross Domestic Product growth at 4.2 per cent last year.

"According to Bank Negara's 2016 Annual Report, released yesterday, we should be recording 4.3 per cent upwards, maybe just under five per cent this year.

"This is our expectation for this year, and 2018, (Malaysia's GDP) will be performing better, barring any unforeseen developments," he said.

On that note, Najib reminded industry players to improve productivity and household debts which currently stood at 89 per cent of GDP.

He said the country's productivity rate must be increased to four per cent, annually, from the current 2.3 per cent.

The Prime Minister also said he needed inputs to help small and medium enterprises become more competitive and develop Digital Malaysia.

Najib said he believed in the principles of human capital development; connectivity in a broad sense of infrastructure, Internet and cyber space; and inclusiveness.

"I believe no Malaysian must be left behind. That is the three principles I believe in and should be part and parcel of our policy as we move forward," he said.

Najib said the iconic Pan Borneo Highway, High-Speed Rail, East-Coast Rail Link and Bandar Malaysia projects were some of the game changers in Malaysia.

"In a few years, I believe the landscape will be different when we see these iconic projects implemented," he added.

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