

PM: 'No toll, cheap fuel' promises will drive up levels of CO2

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The policies advocated by “certain politicians” are bound to increase Malaysia’s carbon footprint at a time when it should be reduced, said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Without naming anyone in particular, Najib said these politicians are promising fewer tolls and subsidised fuel, which would put more cars on the road.

“Quite apart from the fact that they don’t know how they would pay for these policies, they would also promote more cars on the road, thereby putting more carbon dioxide in the air and contributing to a carbon footprint that we must reduce, not increase, if our world is to be a safe environment for humanity.

“By contrast, I promise you that this government will never put short-term political advantage ahead of national interests.

“The safety and security of Malaysians in the years to come will always come first,” he said in his opening speech at the Kuala Lumpur International Youth Discourse at the Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, today.

Pakatan Harapan’s 2018 [alternative budget](#) calls for a RM1 billion allocation for fuel subsidies, which it said would lower fuel prices by about RM0.20 per litre. The coalition had also called for the abolition of highway tolls on several occasions.

Najib addressed the issue of climate change in his speech, along with terrorism, cybersecurity, poverty, drug addiction, affordable housing, and others.

He noted that Malaysia cannot wait for Western nations to take the lead in tackling climate change, because while they continue to debate on whether the effects of the phenomenon are real, Malaysia is already facing its consequences.

Touting Malaysia’s achievements in tackling climate change, Najib said Malaysia had already begun working on non-fossil fuels sources under the Ninth Malaysia Plan, which spanned from 2006 to 2010.

In the following five years under the 10th Malaysia Plan, he said, Malaysia had spent RM51 billion to enhance its resilience against climate change, including addressing flood risk, water security, food security, protecting coastlines, and health.

The 11th Malaysia Plan (2016 to 2020) would see Malaysia continue to promote green policies, he added, including adopting sustainable production and

consumption practices, conserving natural resources, and building resilience against climate change.

Najib also highlighted Malaysia's achievements in cutting carbon dioxide emissions, which is a major contributor to climate change.

He said Malaysia had pledged to reduce carbon dioxide emissions 40 percent by 2020 from 2005 levels, a further 45 percent by 2030, and become carbon-neutral by 2050.

"These are real commitments, not cheap promises – like you will hear from some politicians who are promising less tolls and subsidised oil," he said.

For the record, Malaysia produced 174,487 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide in 2005, according to World Bank figures. This had increased to 242,821kt in 2014, according to the latest figures available from the World Bank.

On a per capita basis, this equates to 6.8t per person in 2005, and 8.0t per person in 2014.

For comparison, the global average in 2005 was 4.5t per person in 2005 and 5.0t per person in 2014. The figure for upper-middle income countries meanwhile was 4.7t per person in 2005, and 6.6t per person in 2014.

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