

Najib: Subsidies? The government already gives plenty
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak says he is aware of calls for the public to give subsidies to help reduce the people's cost of living.

"However, the truth is that the government (already) spends a lot on subsidies in various sectors," he said in a post on his blog today.

Najib cited, among others, a total of RM3.9 billion allocated under Budget 2018 to subsidise goods such as cooking gas, cooking oil, flour, and others.

He said the government also subsidises electricity and tolls to avoid fee hikes, while a whopping RM26.5 billion has been allocated to subsidise public healthcare this year.

Other subsidies he cited were exemptions for public school university fees.

"For example, the fees for a medical course before subsidies is RM289,885. However after subsidies, a medical student only needs to pay RM9,000 throughout their education," he said.

The prime minister added that the government is also providing housing subsidies, which includes the MyDeposit scheme and People's Housing Project (PPR) flats.

"As such, do not listen to accusations that the government does not at all provide subsidies for the people because such accusations are completely untrue," Najib said.

Many Malaysians say they are now feeling the pinch, due to rising fuel prices, as well as rising cost of goods.

Two weeks ago, Ameer Ali Mydin – the managing director of popular hypermarket chain Mydin – said that the country's high GDP did not translate into more purchasing power for consumers, and the people were spending less on groceries.

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