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Concerted effort required to make NKRA on living cost a success

KUALA LUMPUR: While the addition of a National Key Result Area (NKRA) to deal with living cost reflected the government seriousness in improving the quality of life, it will only succeed with the involvement of the people.

National Council of Professors head of economy and finance cluster Prof Datuk Dr Noor Azlan Ghazali said the new NKRA meant that the government, ministries and agencies would be more focus in controlling inflation.

He said price hike should not be addressed merely by the price-controlled mechanism, instead it should focus on the entire product supply chain.

"It is better to focus on competitiveness at every level in the chain. For example, in vegetables, every step of the way from planting, wholesaling, distribution and retailing should be addressed carefully by the government," said Noor Azlan, who is also Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Dean of the Graduate School of Business.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on Thursday announced the NKRA to tackle the rising cost of living affecting the people.

Economic analyst Dr Haim Hilman Abdullah said the global phenomenon should not be tackled by the government alone, instead the people should also take an initiative to improve their quality of life and economic capabilities.

"This is closely linked to our agenda to become a high-income nation. But this not only in the context of what the government should do. The people should also strive to earn better income.

"Ideally, the government must continue to create opportunities and effective policy system to ensure the initiative is effective while the people should spend wisely on key expenditure such as basic necessities, health and education," he added.

Haim Hilman, who is also Universiti Utara Malaysia senior strategic management lecturer, said the people should spend within their means as if they were badly in debt, especially to loan sharks, it could lead to social problems.

Barisan Nasional Backbenchers Council vice-chairman Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan said through the NKRA, the initiative to address price hike would be more systematic in terms of data collection and sound implementation as greater emphasis would be given by various agencies.

The government's efforts would not be effective if the people do not use their purchasing power to boycott unscrupulous traders, he said, adding that non-governmental organisations should also play their role to raise awareness among consumers and retailers on the demerits of rising cost of living. - Bernama