

Higher fuel price may reduce cars on the road

FUEL subsidies have benefited the rich and the poor for many years.

Consumer groups may be right in arguing that the complete removal of fuel subsidy for RON95 petrol and diesel will hit the poor and middle-income earners harder than the rich.

However, the subsidies cut undeniably can save our Government billions of ringgit from not allocating funds for fuel subsidies.

The amount saved can be used for programmes that can help the poor to improve their socio-economic status such as subsidised education or micro loans for small businessmen.

By removing the fuel subsidy, the Government has also made an environmentally responsible move.

Fossil fuel combustion in motor vehicles has been identified as one of the main sources of air pollution globally.



When fossil fuels are burned, they release various pollutants that are released into the atmosphere, including nitrogen oxides which contribute to the formation of smog and acid rain.

The Department of Environment reported that motor vehicles were the second largest contributor to nitrogen oxides emission and the largest source of carbon monoxide

emission in 2013.

Carbon monoxide is a dangerous gas which is harmful to health as it reduces oxygen delivery to our body.

The combustion of fossil fuels including from vehicles also leads to the formation of carbon dioxide, the increasing concentration of which in the atmosphere has exacerbated the "greenhouse effect".

With increasing number of motor vehicles on the Malaysian roads, clean air regulation and its enforcement alone will be insufficient to address the problem of air pollution from mobile sources.

Thus, the Government's move to abolish the fuel subsidy for RON95 and diesel is timely.

The absence of fuel subsidy may lead to many people consolidating driving trips as they want to avoid throwing their expensive fuel away on unnecessary short trips.

Some people may arrange for carpooling or taking public transportation such as buses and trains. Others may even consider walking or cycling instead of driving.

All of these can reduce pollution in our atmosphere, apart from saving us money.

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