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Hadi-Budget

ALTERNATIVE BUDGET BASED ON INFO BY FEDERAL GOVT OFFICERS, SAYS HADI

KEMAMAN, Sept 17 (Bernama) -- The "alternative budget" the opposition unveiled today is based on information provided by federal government officers, Parliamentary Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said today.

He said the officers, economists from local tertiary learning institutions and corporate figures, have helped in drawing up the budget to fulfil the people's aspirations.

"The budget cannot be pushed aside just like that and cannot be considered as a political gimmick or a joke," Hadi, who is also Terengganu Menteri Besar, told reporters after opening the Desa Taqwa mixed housing scheme, here.

The opposition front, comprising PAS, Parti Keadilan Nasional and Parti Rakyat Malaysia, announced last week that it would table a separate budget to oppose the national budget to be tabled by Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, in Parliament on Friday.

Dr Mahathir said yesterday the "alternative budget" was a joke and a political ploy to seek popularity among the people.

Under the opposition budget themed "Budget of Prosperity, Justice and Wellbeing for the People," civil servants would get a RM100 increase in their monthly salary for the next two years.

The budget was drafted and tabled by a lecturer with the Faculty of Economics and Administration of Universiti Malaya, Prof Dr Jomo K. Sundram.

Sundram said the salary increase was aimed at increasing domestic demand.

Hadi said the opposition's budget was fairer as more assistance and emphasis was given to effective channelling of funds to the poor and women's welfare.

"All this while the Federal Government had failed to play its role to eradicate poverty through budgetary allocations approved every year.

"The Federal Government does not have a planned agenda and does not have a fixed target of the people to be brought out of the poverty line," he said.

The acting PAS president also alleged that the additional allocations made in every budget was to help government cronies to secure contracts.

The opposition had also tabled its own budget in 1999 but not at the Dewan Rakyat. It was unveiled by Sundram at a media conference.

The budget themed "The People's Budget" did not mention the estimated revenue and the money to be spent by the opposition, instead the so-called Alternative Front then, which include DAP, heaped blame on the actions taken by the government in tackling the economic slowdown.

-- BERNAMA

SN TS