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#### Off-the-mark Hadi criticised

reports on "Dewan Rakyat" by V. Anbalagan; P. Sujatani; Deborah Loh  
OPPOSITION leader Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang came under fire yesterday for straying from debating Budget 2004 and raising unrelated issues like the performance of the Terengganu Government.

Several backbenchers protested when the Marang MP and Pas president, who is also Terengganu Menteri Besar, spoke on what his administration had done to tackle poverty in the State.

Datuk Mohamed Aziz (BN-Sri Gading) expressed disappointment with Hadi, who in his speech criticised Parliament for failing to adjourn the tabling of the Budget for Asar prayers.

He said former Opposition leader Datuk Fadzil Noor was more constructive in his criticism, besides giving input on the Budget.

"I think he (Hadi) was so busy with the party's muktamar over the weekend that he came here unprepared," said Mohamed, who took the floor after Hadi.

He said Hadi and other Opposition MPs should thank Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for tabling a well-rounded Budget.

Mohamed said he expected the Opposition to exploit the prayer issue to further divide the people.

Datuk Bung Moktar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan), who stood up for clarification, questioned why Hadi did not ask the Chair to adjourn the proceedings to allow Muslim MPs and officials to perform their prayers.

"It looks like the Opposition does not have an issue as the Budget is very comprehensive.

"Hadi is using the prayer issue to discredit Dr Mahathir," he said, adding Hadi had an ulterior motive in raising the matter.

Earlier, Hadi had a busy time responding to queries from, among others, Parliamentary Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Noh Omar, Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique (BN-Wangsa Maju), Datuk Mohd Ali Hassan (BN-Tebrau), Datuk Shaziman Abu Mansor (BN-Tampin) and Bung Moktar.

There were heated exchanges when the backbenchers told him to stick to the topic before the House.

The situation was made worse when several Pas MPs joined in the fray defending their boss.

Some took the opportunity to run down the Government.

Mahfuz Omar (Pas-Pokok Sena) said a senior Cabinet Minister should be prosecuted if the Government was serious in wiping out corruption.

Datuk Dr Hassan Ali (Pas-Parit Buntar) said RTM must also include Opposition MPs as guests in the Selamat Pagi Malaysia programme.

This prompted Women and Family Development Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Mastika Junaidah Husin to call on Hadi to stop dividing the Malays.

"There are cases of people praying in separate surau and gatherings boycotted by some quarters," she said.

Later, Datuk Abdul Hamid Abdul Rahman (BN-Sungai Benut) proposed that the Government establish a university focusing on leadership and entrepreneurship.

He said inculcating such values in students was important as degrees alone would not be sufficient in the globalised world.