

Budget 2012 unrealistic, says Anwar
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim rubbished the government's Budget announcement today, calling it "an unrealistic" one unable to tackle the nation's widening deficit.

"The deficit growth has never been corrected, even in terms of expenditure, (I suspect) in the next three months there will be another huge supplementary allocation," said the Permatang Pauh PKR parliamentarian.

azlan "It's clearly an election ploy," he said, accusing that portions of today's announcement were "lifted off" Pakatan Rakyat's proposed shadow budget.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak delivered the Budget 2012 speech in the Dewan Rakyat today and said that the budget which has been in deficit since 1998, is expected to fall to 4.7 percent.

Najib added that the government expects economic growth to remain strong - between 5 and 5.5 percent this year, after allocating RM232.8 billion for next year.

"There is no effective measure to tackle the deficit and the figure is not realistic and I will prove this," said Anwar.

azlan "The way they spend with no revenue and they still talk of deficit 4.7 percent, as opposed to what we propose," he said.

Last year, Malaysia's FDI growth was the strongest in Asia and in the first six months of this year had reached RM21.2 billion.

"If you talk about success in foreign direct investment, it is mainly in Selangor and Penang (but) that has not been recognised," said Anwar.

Pakatan, in their shadow budget, came up with a RM220 billion limit to tackle the ballooning deficit to a manageable level of 4.4 percent.

'Transparency and waste not dealt with'

"This is not how a budget should be crafted. The other issue (to) criticise, is the issue of transparency, corruption, mismanagement and waste - which has not been dealt with," said Anwar.

Seeing red in Najib's proposal to increase the salary and allowance of parliamentarians, Anwar said Pakatan is not supportive of the move.

"This is a period of hardship for the people, I don't think it is time to talk and consider increasing the salary of MPs," he added.

"I don't deny that it is pleasing to the people... some of it is the Pakatan's shadow budget which it copied but Budget has to be responsibly made," he reiterated.