

'Icing on mud' budget has no long term plan

Malaysiakini.com

October 08,2011

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The prime minister cum finance minister has (it seems) presented a very interesting, encouraging and prospective Budget 2012.

However, what it lacks is a comprehensive plan for the control of the day to day and essential foodstuffs whose costs keep rising at a very rapid rate and thus poses a great burden on the majority of Malaysians, especially those employed in the lower rungs of the private sector, whose earning power has remained almost stagnant for a long time.

I see this budget as more of an 'icing on mud' while urgent issues are given less prominence. Small subsidies here and there and one off cash assistance does no doubt help a bit, but not enough has been allocated to ease the increasing burden of the poor people to meet their obligations and daily sustenance.

The burden is further exacerbated with the influx of foreign workers with more than what is necessary being given entry, thereby putting a big strain on the economy and expenditure and causing hardships to the local people.

The government servants always have some protection from their employer when situations are bad but the poor and mostly neglected workers in the private sector have to fend for themselves.

The one off cash handout would have a better financial supporting tool if it had been increased to a level more or less proportionate to the current cost of living and distributed on a monthly basis.

It is not a constraint on the government to do it if they can shelf all prestigious and glamorous projects currently under way and curtail wastage and abuses of federal funds.

The rich can cushion any additional expenses to their daily living and the businesses thus affected have a way of passing the buck back to the poor consumer, who ultimately pays the price for inflation and commodity price adjustments.

It is yet to be seen as to whatever being provided for the poor people in this budget will be implemented immediately or at the a time when the government feels right and fit. Whereas in comparison, when there is an increase in fuel or cooking gas prices or alcohol or tobacco, it is implemented the immediate next day after the announcement of the new budget.

In conclusion, the new budget has the appearance of an election ploy knowing the dwindling support and popularity of the ruling government among the elite and urban residents.

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