

Opposition slams Najib's 'People's Budget'
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BUDGET 2015 Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak Budget 2015 speech elicited instant reaction on social media, not least of all from MPs tweeting from the House.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim mocked the announcement of the Pan Borneo highway as a re-run.

"Najib announces the Pan Borneo highway. Applause for BN... but (it's been) six years (of) announcing the same thing," tweeted the PKR leader.

Met by reporters later, the opposition leaders seemed to focus their disappointment on the lack of measures to curb corruption.

In particular, the Permatang Pauh MP said the PM failed to address issues of leakages, including in government procurement.

Further, he said, the government has not shown how it will tackle expected price hikes after the goods and services tax is implemented.

"It should not be merely exemptions but (the) approach to address the expected rise in prices," he said.

Echoing Anwar (left), Penang Chief Minister and Bagan MP Lim Guan Eng said failure to address cronyism is inconsistent with Najib's claim that it is the people's budget.

Helaluded the decision not to impose the GST on petrol but believes the government should have just retained the subsidies instead.

"I think people will choose more for petrol not to be increased by 20 sen," said the DAP secretary-general.

Giveaways are just to justify GST

Meanwhile, PAS information chief Mahfuz Omar, said there is nothing new in this year's budget except giveaways.

"They just want the rakyat to accept the rationale that GST is implemented in order to benefit the rakyat but in actuality, its implementation and exemptions on certain things still do not show justice," he said.

Skepticism was also rife on Twitter from among the opposition bench.

PAS' Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad wondered about the proposal to build a few new hospitals, given that the Shah Alam hospital construction is six years behind time.

PKR's Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli (right), meanwhile, laughed off Najib's reminder to student loan defaulters that their debts will haunt them, even in death.

"Spirit floating? What about the NFC's (National Feedlot Corporation) debts? Hanging in One Menerung?" tweeted Rafizi.

He was referring to the condominium unit bought by NFC's directors using funds allocated for the feedlot project, leading to a criminal breach of trust charge.

Meanwhile, others raised concern over the lack of measures to assist the middle class.

Merdeka Centre's Tan Seng Keat said: "2015 is the year that the middle class in Malaysia gets squeezed and the lower income people get hit.

"The 2015 budget is the super rich people's budget."

PKR's Bayan Baru MP Sim Tze Tzin, however, sees it differently

For Sim, the rise in goodies like the Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M) will only mean less spending on development.

"BR1M is up. I wonder if this will anger (former premier) Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Reality is no matter how much goodies the government gives, once the GST kicks in, life will be painful," he said.

Dr Mahathir had been vocal over the cash handouts, likening them to bribery.