

## **Brace for challenging times, tighten your belts, PM tells ministries**

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has instructed ministers to brace for challenging times ahead and tighten their belts with regard to their respective ministries, according to *Star Online*.

The news portal said International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed met the prime minister last week to discuss the ministry's proposals to strengthen the economy.

"Miti is asking for a bit more allocation. We understand the situation but we hope for support for investment and trade promotion.

"We have been informed that times are tough, but it is important that the government and Treasury decide what the priorities are.

"Some you have got to give away. You win some, you lose some," he was quoted as saying.

Stressing on the need to spend public funds in a wise manner, the prime minister would hold special sessions with the ministers to find out their needs and aspirations on Budget 2017.

Najib is scheduled to table the budget on Friday.

Meanwhile, Mustapa said Miti's proposals centred on emphasis for investment and trade, and supporting small and medium enterprises.

He said the business community raised the issue of the rising costs of doing business and hoped that the budget would not burden them.

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