

PM: Opposition turned back on people's welfare with budget walkout

MalaysiaKini.com

Oct 22nd, 2016

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said the opposition turned its back on the people's welfare when it walked out of the Dewan Rakyat during the tabling of Budget 2017 yesterday.

"The opposition disrespected the people by [walking out](#) when Budget tabled for debate.

"We talked about welfare, but they turned their backs," Najib said on Twitter today.

Opposition MPs walked out carrying placards that read 'Siapa MO1' (Who is MO1, Malaysian Official 1?), in reference to the unnamed individual cited in the United States Department of Justice lawsuit to seize assets believed bought with funds stolen from 1MDB.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Abdul Rahman Dahlan eventually admitted publicly 'Malaysian Official 1' is Najib, but argued the fact he was not named in the suit means he is not the subject of the civil forfeiture action.

'Malaysian Official 1' received US\$730 million of funds originating from 1MDB, the DOJ said in its court filings.

Salleh: Parliament not circus

Meanwhile, Communications and Multimedia Act Minister Salleh Said Keruak said the walkout was a show of immaturity.

"It is bad enough that the opposition does not have a shadow cabinet and shadow finance minister.

"Now the opposition wants to treat Parliament like a circus," he said.

"Must everything be turned into a protest demonstration?" he asked in a statement.

He said the opposition should understand that the tabling of the federal budget is "serious business" and they should instead contribute ideas for improvement.

Najib yesterday tabled a budget of RM260.8 billion.

This is the second consecutive contracting federal budget, lower than the 2014 budget, signalling difficult times abound.

Among areas that suffered cuts include the Prime Minister's Department, public varsities, teaching hospitals and tax breaks.

Walkout described as 'childish'

In a series of Twitter postings today, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of the Economic Planning Unit Abdul Rahman Dahlan described the opposition's walkout as "childish".

"They (opposition) staged walkouts of Parliament every year from 2008 to 2012. Then they lost in the 2013 general election.

"They walked out again from Parliament every year from 2013 to 2015. Then they lost against in Sarawak election and two by-elections.

"Yesterday, they walked out of Parliament again. When will they realise this childish behaviour won't earn any support from the people?" he asked.

He said Bersatu President Muhyiddin Yassin had claimed that they walked out because the prime minister was unable to give an assurance the proposals in Budget 2017 could be delivered.

It is hypocritical for the opposition to feel this way, Abdul Rahman said, because the opposition's alternative budget is mainly based on BN's revenue assumptions.

Meanwhile, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin reportedly said the opposition was free to do what they did, but as MPs, they should know that they could argue on the budget during the two-week debate session.

"We should show our professionalism during the budget speech; yesterday was the prime minister's turn to present the budget as finance minister.

"If we don't agree, we can express it in our speech or debate. Many people have criticised the MPs' action as immature," he was quoted as saying today by *Bernama*.

Yesterday, House Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia also expressed how he felt about the opposition's conduct.

"Nine years I've served, (only) today I am truly disappointed," he reportedly said.

He added that the opposition had gone against Standing Order 41 (1) of the Dewan Rakyat.