

## **Najib in Parliament, but sits out Budget 2017 debate and vote**

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PARLIAMENT Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak was in Parliament today, but sat out the Budget 2017 policy stage debate wrap-up, and left the House just before the budget vote.

Najib arrived half-way through Finance Minister II Johari Abdul Ghani's speech wrapping up the policy stage budget debate, at 8.40pm.

He walked through the main doors leading into the House, but was not spotted on the Dewan Rakyat floor.

It is believed that he had gone to the speaker's chambers.

During the debate, Gobind Singh Deo (DAP-Puchong) openly challenged Najib to come out and answer questions on 1MDB and the RM2.6 billion donation.

“Where is the PM? Why is he hiding inside there (the speaker's chambers)?” Gobind asked the Dewan.

Gobind had wanted to know the status of the police investigation into 1MDB, as well as to whom Najib had returned US\$620 million of the US\$681 million he allegedly received as a donation.

He had previously posed these questions to Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, [last Wednesday](#). Zahid, however, passed the buck to Johari.

Johari was unable to answer the query about the probe, saying it was under investigation, while he did not answer the question about the donation.

Shortly after, Najib was seen rushing out of Parliament, just as Johari ended his speech, and a bloc vote was called.

The Budget passed to the committee stage with 117 votes in favour and 70 against.

Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia said 11 lawmakers did not vote.

Najib has a poor attendance record in Parliament, and questions aimed at him are often answered by the various ministers in the Prime Minister's Department or by their deputies.

The prime minister had [rapped the opposition](#) for walking out on his Budget 2017 speech on Oct 21, saying they had turned their backs on the people.

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