

**'I think all this is only for show'**  
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Following the announcement of the hike in pump prices on June 5, the government yesterday MCPX revealed a RM2 billion cost-cutting package to save expenditure.

abdullah ahamad badawi pm anti inflation pc 090608 01The cost-cutting measures were mooted by Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who said that the government feels the pain of the people and wants to lead by example by pulling back several privileges enjoyed by ministers and their deputies.

The cutback on perks includes a 10 percent reduction on entertainment expenditure for ministers and their deputies.

If the PM had RM18,865 in entertainment allowance before, he can claim RM16,978.50 now.

The austerity drive also caps the previous limitless holiday destinations by ministers and deputy ministers, and confines them to Asean and local destinations.

Special attire will also not be made for functions and the government will also limit the number of events held in hotels.

Malaysiakini asked members of the public how they view this latest move. Here are their responses.

Veronica Akiew, 26, senior training consultant

petrol price hike vox populi interview 100608 veronica akiewAre these expenditures necessary? Like entertainment and all? With the high cost of living, crime rate will also increase but the government does not take that into consideration.

The government conducts functions in posh hotels. They should just hold functions in Putrajaya. They spend lavishly (using) my money instead.

The ones who are truly affected by this fuel hike are the middle class who have a lifestyle to maintain.

Basri, 30, taxi driver

I think all this is only for show. They will all talk but they will not truly implement these cutbacks. If they really do want to reduce the burden of the people, increase the quantum of the cutbacks.

Sjafrial, 39, manager

I would like the government to declare these cutbacks in black and white. Be more transparent. They will simply talk to soften the hearts of the people. They may implement the move for the first two months, then what happens (throughout the year)?

Lucy, 31, banker

They want to show their concern but they are not dealing with the real issues at hand.

Selena, 35, unit trust consultant

They should cut back more. It's good that they announced (this move) but I think they should slash the budget by half.

Rina Mardiana, 30, kuih seller

I think this is a good move but please do implement this initiative, don't just talk about the initiative. I don't see that the government is empathising with the people with this move. To show empathy, they should stick with the subsidised fuel.

Markolis, 39, cobbler

petrol price hike vox populi interview 100608 markolisI would just advise everyone to be more careful with their expenditure. But the fuel prices have had a toll on my life no doubt.

If we spent RM3,000 a month before, now we would need to spend RM3,500. Where will I get the additional RM500?

If the government thinks this is a good move then it is a good move, if they say it is a bad move then it is a bad move.

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