

**Lim: Why stop at paltry 10 percent cut?**  
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The government's decision to cut 10 percent of the ministerial entertainment allowances has left veteran DAP legislator Lim Kit Siang wondering: Why can't it be cut by half?  
MCPX

"If the government can increase oil prices (by) 41 percent (for petrol and) 63 percent (for diesel), why can't it slash the entertainment allowances of cabinet ministers and deputy ministers by 50 percent and not just a paltry 10 percent?" said Lim in a blog-post today.

It was disclosed that the monthly entertainment allowance is RM18,865 for the premier, RM15,015 for his deputy, RM12,320 for ministers and RM6,000 for their deputies.

dap education roundtable meeting 111006 lim kit siang "What about all the other allowances, including tips allowances which run into hundreds of ringgit a day, (to) which ministers and deputy ministers are entitled?" Lim asked.

He was commenting on Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's announcement on the 10 percent cut as part of a new austerity drive to curb spending by RM2 billion annually.

Other measures will see a freeze on new employment (non essential positions) within the government, renovation work, assets acquisition (cars, computers, furniture, etc) and a limit on budgets for government functions.

Paid vacations for ministers and deputy ministers - previously to any destination annually - will be limited to the Asean region and for a duration not exceeding seven days.

abdullah ahmad badawi oil and gas conference 090608 01Abdullah said that the RM2 billion would be utilised to assist the lower-income groups and that government leaders are undertaking cost-cutting measures to "show a good example".

Other than the entertainment allowances, Lim called on the government to make public "all the various forms of allowances" enjoyed by ministers and their deputies..

"It should be made public not only as a form of leadership by example... but also to demonstrate that the ministers and deputies feel the pain of the people caused by the unconscionable and callous oil price hikes," he said.

Last Wednesday, Abdullah announced another reduction in subsidy for petrol and diesel with effect from June 5, as well as higher price of gas for the electrical and industrial sectors. Tenaga Nasional Bhd will revise its electricity tariff with effect from July 1.

The inflation rate is set to go up to 5 percent alongside the expected rise in the prices of goods and services, further feeding public anger which has been building since the cost of living began rising last year.

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