

**Kit Siang calls for new Budget 2009**  
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**Fauwaz Abdul Aziz**

DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang called on just-appointed Finance Minister Najib Abdul Razak to table a new Budget 2009 given the economic changes that have occurred over the past few weeks.

According to Lim, a lot of water has since passed under the bridge including the sharp fall in world oil prices. The Budget 2009 tabled by Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on Aug 29 has become "obsolete" and "outdated", he added.

pakatan rakyat zaid ibrahim parliament anti isa teresa kok caucus 170908 03 "I think it is ridiculous to present the budget on the Aug 29, break for six weeks, and come back to debate when the whole economic situation could be very, very different," said Lim at the outset of the 'Free Teresa Kok Parliamentary Caucus' in Kuala Lumpur today.

"If you're going to have a new finance minister, let there be a new budget on Oct 13 (when Parliament reconvenes) and you can have a proper debate on the economic situation of the country. You cannot have a debate on an obsolete, outdated budget."

Abdullah announced earlier today the swap of portfolios with Najib. He handed over his finance portfolio to his deputy, while assuming Najib's defense ministry.

### **Disenchantment**

Lim also said as there has been considerable "disenchantment" with Abdullah within and outside the Barisan Nasional, the swap of portfolios between him and Najib would not help in solving any of the prime minister's problems.

DAP national chairperson Karpal Singh, also at the press conference, expressed suspicion of Abdullah's announcement.

pakatan rakyat zaid ibrahim parliament anti isa teresa kok caucus 170908 01 "Obviously, something is afoot, or else you wouldn't have such an important thing as the ministry of finance being given to Najib.

"Of course, the defense being given by him is just to save face. Otherwise, if you take it away from him, he has got no other ministry," Karpal added.

Karpal said he was unsure if Najib was up to the job since this is the first time the latter has been tasked with managing the finance portfolio.

"He's not tested yet, so it is not difficult to say. But I think it is significant, or else he wouldn't have taken over such an important ministry."

Abdullah inherited the finance portfolio along with the premiership from Dr Mahathir Mohamad. Mahathir had taken over the finance ministry after sacking Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim in 1998.

Anwar had then been deputy prime minister as well as finance minister.

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