

No welfare without justice, says Hadi
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 9 — PAS has scoffed at the government's claim when tabling Budget 2012 that it has focused on public welfare, insisting that Barisan Nasional (BN) has denied the rights of the people.

PAS President Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said in a statement that a welfare state must be fair and just, and not just geared towards winning votes ahead of a general election.

"The government has for years withheld oil royalty from Kelantan and Terengganu, a clear betrayal and a broken promise which is far from fulfilling the requirements of a welfare state," he said.

Abdul Hadi was referring to Putrajaya's insistence since PAS governed Terengganu from 1999-2004 that it does not owe billion-ringgit oil royalties to the two states.

Kelantan, which is still held by PAS, is currently suing the federal government and Petronas for a sum that could reach into the tens of billions of ringgit.

"Public funds being wasted to pay the water and electricity bills of the prime minister does not reflect leadership with integrity," he added, referring to the RM12 million spent on Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his deputy Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's official residences.

Najib had tabled a budget themed "National Transformation Policy: Welfare for the Rakyat, Well-Being of the Nation" which included RM2.5 billion in cash handouts and a pay increase for the country's 1.3 million civil servants worth RM2 billion.

But Hadi said that "Najib does not understand the concept of a welfare state" as proposed by the Islamic party.

He accused the prime minister of "giving handouts to the public during election season but letting them suffer from inflation at other times."

PAS had unveiled its "Negara Berkebajikan" concept in the middle of the year.

BN leaders mocked the opposition party for dropping its commitment to an Islamic state and also insisted that the ruling coalition had already introduced a welfare state through subsidies and other social safety measures.

But PAS has insisted it has not proposed a welfare state (negara kebajikan) but a benevolent (negara berkebajikan) which also focuses on good governance and social justice which are part of an Islamic state.