

**PAS: Budget handouts fruit of people power**  
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**By Melissa Chi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 9 — PAS today credited the handouts and stimulus announced in Friday's Budget 2012 to sustained public pressure since Barisan Nasional's (BN) worst electoral result in 2008.

Information chief Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man called on the public to continue leaning on BN to ensure "the good news" from the Budget will not be withdrawn.

"The public must see this Budget as their success in putting pressure on the BN government in the last general election.

"Now, BN is trying to get back support through the Budget, which appears to be people-centric, after sidelining the public with mega projects for cronies for the past few decades," he said in a statement today.

Datuk Seri Najib Razak promised RM4.5 billion in cash handouts for the poor and students, pay increases for civil servants and a fund for "high-impact development" projects to put money in the pockets of voters ahead of a general election expected soon.

The prime minister's Budget also set aside RM33.2 billion for subsidies.

But Tuan Ibrahim pointed out that there were no measures for increasing wages to help people cope with the rising cost of living, as well as an absence of methods to stop leakages, corruption, abuse of power and cronyism.

"It is impossible for money to fall from the sky with the global economic downturn.

"What is sure is that the goods and services tax will be introduced, and then the six per cent prepaid phone tax will be pushed onto the people's shoulder after the 13th general election and subsidies will be cut if BN continues to be in power [then]," he said.

He added that past experience has shown the government will announce price hikes for daily necessities once elections are over.

"People already know Umno's tricks. They will not be numbed by the 'morphine injection'," he said.

Although Najib projected that the fiscal deficit will fall to 4.7 per cent, this is based on economic growth of between five and six per cent, which analysts have said was too high.

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