

PM labels Pakatan Budget right-wing, Republican
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 16 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak has called the Opposition's shadow Budget a "right-wing Republican" budget that failed to address the needs of the people.

The prime minister said Pakatan Rakyat's (PR) shadow Budget, unveiled three days before his own Budget 2012, had only focused on Malaysia's budget gap and national debt but made no mention of public welfare.

"When they debate in Parliament they sound like very fiscal, right-wing Republican conservatives. About fiscal deficit, about debt ... (but) nothing about the people.

"But our Budget can reduce fiscal deficit and ensure the people's welfare. This is the Barisan Nasional Budget," he told the Gerakan National Delegates Assembly at Menara PGRM here today.

Najib also took a jab at what he said was PR's inconsistency in deriding the Budget as unrealistic while also claiming BN had plagiarised policy proposals from the Opposition's Buku Jingga manifesto.

"They cannot decide what is the right line. If you say we borrow from you, later on you say the Budget is unrealistic, that means your proposal was unrealistic in the first place," he said to cheers from the packed gallery.

In his Budget speech on October 7, Najib pledged RM2 billion in wage hikes for the civil service and RM2.5 billion in direct aid for poor households and students struggling to meet the rising cost of living.

He also said the government expects GDP to expand by five to six per cent next year, with fiscal deficit shrinking to 4.7 per cent from an estimated 5.4 per cent this year as Putrajaya cuts down on development spending.

But both analysts and Opposition leaders have criticised the growth projections as being too high, and expect the national economy to expand by a little over four per cent at the most.

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