

**2012 State Budget Not 'Election Budget' - Tawfiq
Bernama
November 26, 2011**

TAWAU, Nov 26 (Bernama) -- Sabah Assistant Finance Minister Datuk Tawfiq Abu Bakar Titingan has dismissed allegations by certain quarters that the RM4.048 billion 2012 state budget was an 'election budget'.

He said the budget, which is by far the most substantial in the state's history, is realistic and in line with Sabah's development needs for the betterment of the population.

"It is indeed, an enormous budget. But last year, we also approved a huge one, which was similarly, a record.

"So, if we have a huge budget every year, does it mean we would hold an election every year?," he countered.

Tawfiq was speaking to reporters after visiting stalls at the 1Malaysia Broadband Carnival organised by the information, communication and culture ministry, in cooperation with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and Telekom Malaysia at Padang Bandaran Tawau here today.

He said the budget was justified, considering the size of Sabah, such that even the Kinabatangan constituency situated in the east coast, was as vast as a state in the peninsula.

"To ensure the development gap in rural areas is narrowed socially and economically, we need such budget to enable, among others, information communication technology penetration for the rural folk," he added.

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