

**Nor Yakcop says domestic spending a vote of confidence for BN policies**  
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**By Lisa J. Ariffin**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 29 — Minister in charge of the Economic Planning Unit Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop insisted today the public has faith in the government's economic policies, as indicated by an increase in domestic spending.

"If they have apprehensions about the government, Malaysians will not spend. But the opposite is happening. Domestic spending is going up annually.

"Malaysians are not afraid to spend because they know that the country is progressive," the minister in the prime minister's department told reporters in his Tasek Gelugor constituency.

Domestic consumption grew by 5.2 per cent in 2010 and by 6.6, 5.2 and nine per cent for the first three quarters of 2011 respectively.

Pakatan Rakyat (PR) and Barisan Nasional (BN) have traded blows over economic policies after Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim accused Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak on Friday of shoring up cronies despite embarking on an economic reform programme.

But the latter shot back the same evening, saying the opposition's promises of abolishing tolled roads, writing off study loans and reducing fuel prices were "a recipe for economic disaster" as the government would have to absorb RM40 billion in study loans alone.

This led to Anwar inviting Najib to participate in a debate, the fourth such challenge he has issued to his political archrival.

The DAP also said yesterday it was BN who would bankrupt the country as Pemandu minister Datuk Seri Idris Jala had warned that the resource-rich country would be bankrupt by 2019 if the government continues with its existing economic policies.

But Nor Mohamed Yakcop dismissed today such claims as a political game by the Opposition to intimidate Malaysians.

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