

**Budget 2013: A wish list from various groups**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 28 — For Budget 2013, living costs are of the greatest concern to Malaysians. Here is a snapshot of what Malaysians want:

- Budget wish-list from unions/student groups
- REFSA executive director Teh Chi Chang

"I certainly don't want the Budget to grow any bigger. We've already run 15 years of deficits and our national borrowings are reaching alarming levels.

"The federal government does not need to spend more. It can spend more effectively. For example, if it hadn't paid RM56,000 for binoculars costing just over RM1,000; or if subsidies are going only to the poor, as they should, the Budget can be smaller and we can still be better off.

"The 2012 subsidy bill is expected to be RM33 billion. Bear in mind that in addition to the RM33 billion federal government subsidies, Petronas also subsidises cheap gas for the IPPs and industries totalling about RM20 billion per year.

"If these subsidies are given to only the poor, as they should be, and not the rich, this would be enough to give the bottom one-third of households more than RM2,200 per month in welfare support payments! There shouldn't be a single poor Malaysian!"

Malaysian CARE executive director Wong Young Soon

"These are what we wish for as a social work organisation working with the poor and marginalised:

"1. Allocation to support social work training for workers in the NGO sector in view of the impending Social Workers Act.

"2. Allocation to support furthering inclusive pre-school education for special needs children in the private sector in line with government aims to enhance public-private partnership in pre-school development for an inclusive society as stated in the 10th Malaysia Plan.

"3. More allocation for better maintenance of public facilities in low-cost flats in ALL states, whether BN or PR.

"4. Strengthen monitoring of the distribution and use of all allocated funds to prevent ineffective usage/misuse by civil society in the process."

Colin Nicholas, co-ordinator of the Centre for Orang Asli Concerns (COAC)

"Sufficient funds be set aside to do a complete audit of the Department of Orang Asli Development (JAKOA). Both a financial audit and a management audit of all its services and responsibilities.

"More funds allocated to survey Orang Asli traditional land and territories with a view to get them titled or gazetted as Orang Asli Reserve. But the choice of areas to be surveyed and titled should be done in a transparent manner and with no ulterior motive behind the selection of settlements."

"More funds for provision of basic infrastructure and facilities (including electricity, roads, health and education)."

"Gradual abolishment of excise taxes. Excise tax to be reduced by 20 per cent annually for the period of five years. It is intended to avoid a shock to dealers and the market."

"The effect and impact received will not be too big for dealers, banks and second-hand car sales."

"Distribution of APs through open tender; open tender should be introduced, particularly to generate government revenue."

"Create a policy to scrap cars that are over 15 years old. This policy can increase car sales and reduce (the number of) old cars on the road."

Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (FOMCA) president Datuk Marimuthu Nadason

"First, I would like to see how the budget this year tackles our main problem of rising prices, especially food items."

"Second, I hope this year's budget can also focus on public transportation, not just the Klang Valley but smaller town like Bidor, Taiping, etc, where it's hard to get buses and taxis."

"Third, we would like this year's budget is to maintain law and order and to curb crime rates. The increase in crime is worrying."

"Fourth is food security. We are importing RM30 billion worth of food every year; we need to spend more on food security so we don't need to pay more for imports of food. We need new innovation in agriculture so we can grow more food for Malaysia."

"Fifth is to focus on better healthcare and sixth is to curb education cost that is getting higher every year."

"Overall, we hope on bread-and-butter issues."

Solidariti Mahasiswa Malaysia (SMM) chairman Safwan Anang

"We hope to see free education and abolishment of PTPTN loans."

Majlis Perwakilan Mahasiswa Nasional president Mohd Syahid Mohd Zaini

"Free education, if possible, free from pre-school until university."

Aspirasi UTM council president Wan Ahmad Hazwan Wan Daud

"We ask for the book vouchers to be continued. Many discounts that we asked for have been given in the undergraduate discount card, but if possible we want discounts for bus tickets and train tickets."

Real Estate and Housing Developers (REHDA) chairman Datuk Seri Michael Yam

"Cost of doing business for developers should be lowered by not imposing capital contribution charges.

"Currently, developers are required to pay various capital contributions such as sewerage, electricity, water, telecommunications and CIDB levy.

"In addition to those contributions, housing development also involves surrender of land, construction of facilities and infrastructure as well as compliance of other planning requirements.

"Abolishment of the mandatory delivery of low-cost houses. On average, at present the cost to build low-cost houses (excluding land cost): strata RM100,000, landed RM70,000."

"Revision of the Bumiputera quota policy. The Bumiputera quota housing policy should be standardised across all states.

"No imposition of new conditions on titles for Bumiputera units as it will only create restriction-in-interest on the property and be viewed by the market as unpreferred property. This has resulted in Bumiputera purchasers preferring to buy non-Bumiputera units.

"Review of stamp duty rates. In order to help keep costs of homeownership at a more affordable level for the general public, REHDA is proposing a reduction in stamp duty rates."

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