

Shadow budget shows Pakatan aimless and confused, says Najib

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PUTRAJAYA, Oct 26 — Pakatan Harapan's (PH) adoption of Barisan Nasional's policies in its alternative budget exposed the federal Opposition pact's lack of leadership and cohesion, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Speaking to the media today, he noted that these included measures his administration has put in place but which the pact previously criticised and said it would dismantle.

Among these was the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M), which PH chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad once derided as “dedak”, the Malay word for animal feed but used as a pejorative for enticement.

“At one time, they say they don't want BR1M, and now in their alternative budget, they say they want the BR1M,” Najib said.

He also honed in on his rival's failure to fully account for the loss of revenue that would be caused by its proposals such as the promise to repeal the goods and services tax (GST).

PH's plan to abolish the consumption tax and revert to the sales and services tax (SST) would create a shortfall of RM20 billion, he said when noting that this was not addressed.

“Where and how they are going to make up the shortfall? It can only mean that they will raise income tax,” said Najib at a briefing for editors here today.

The GST was also an equitable system that better spread the burden of taxation, Najib added when saying that just 2.2 million out of the 14 million working Malaysians currently pay any form of income tax.

Repealing the GST would simply create the temptation to tax this group further, he explained.

He also targeted PH's pledge to offer free education, saying this would cost around RM40 billion or almost 15 per cent of the entire budget for this year.

“That's a big hole; where are you going to get RM40 billion from?” he asked. “You're promising something that cannot be delivered, unless they can prove where the RM40 billion is going to come from.”

Calling the promises typical of Opposition politicians, the prime minister said the citizens of many countries have learned not to take such pledges at face value, adding that those seeking power were often willing to mislead the public for their own gains.

“It's been proven many, many times that the objective is just to get into office. The objective is not whether they can deliver or not.”

“As the government, when we say something, we must be able to deliver. So, whatever we promise we will deliver. That is the difference.”

Najib will table the Budget for 2018 in Parliament tomorrow.

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