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Study on raising number of middle-class Bumiputeras

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The Government is studying several proposals aimed at increasing the number of middle-class Bumiputeras.

Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said they included several privatisation projects which would see greater participation of Bumiputeras.

He said the number of middle-class Bumiputeras, especially among entrepreneurs, was still inadequate, adding that efforts taken so far had not been that successful.

Anwar was speaking at the Malay Chamber of Commerce Malaysia's annual dinner tonight.

Among those present were Anwar's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and the chamber's newly elected president, Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli.

Anwar said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had also directed Umno, State governments and the Cabinet to give emphasis on producing more middle-class Malays.

"I have met with several corporate leaders to discuss ways to ensure this aim is achieved.

"The co-operation from non-Bumiputeras in the private sector would also be sought as it would be wise for all quarters to ensure the vibrant economic development benefits everyone".

He also reminded government departments and agencies that while measures to liberalise the policies were carried out, they must not result in middle-class Bumiputeras being left out of the mainstream development.

Touching on the role of the chamber, Anwar said its agenda must be continued, especially those on eradication of poverty and uplifting the standard of middle-class Malays.

Later, Anwar witnessed the launching of the Tan Sri Yahaya Ahmad's scholarship fund initiated by the chamber.

The fund, named after its former president who died in a helicopter crash on March 4 this year, started with a sum of RM250,000 - being the proceeds from the dinner.

A play titled Anak Tanjung, based on the work of national laureate Datuk Noordin Hassan, was also staged.

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