

**MB defends hiring of Anwar as economic advisor**  
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Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim kicked off the state's 2012 budget dialogue by justifying his government's decision to employ PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim as an economic advisor.

Addressing an audience of about 500 today, Abdul Khalid in his opening speech said that those who criticise this move do not understand the value of experience.

"There are many politicians who question why (we need to employ Anwar) (left).

"The value of experience, of knowledge on economic crises, and if we don't use this knowledge then we are not very wise... especially since the price is so low that I am embarrassed to say it," he said.

Anwar is paid RM1 per month by the state, a figure the former finance minister had sought in order to avoid being accused of reaping riches from the state.

"If you spend RM10 billion doing the wrong thing, fixing that mistake would take hundreds of millions more. That is the value.

"I hope the discussions on this at the level of badmouthing will stop, and we can discuss how to use (Anwar's) knowledge for our good governance," Abdul Khalid said.

**New LRT almost finalised**

Separately, the MB told reporters that 80 percent of the new LRT expansion stations have been approved.

The final hurdle, he said, is the Putra Heights station, which will only be decided upon after the technical assessment is ready.

"The residents there are worried that the soil might not be stable as it passes through a lake area.

"When the technical assessment is ready, the stakeholders can meet," he said.

However, he noted that work on other parts of the line has begun so as to not delay the project.

"We are assisting the federal government in terms of land acquisition, gazetting reserves and meeting people.

"I have also asked local governments to cooperate in order to speed this up.. as the MRT and LRT will alleviate traffic problems," he said.