

**CM: Najib can't convince people of sincerity unless...**

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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng says the federal government cannot convince the public of its "sincerity and necessity" of raising the price of RON95 petrol if it does not implement an open tender system or fight corruption.

"Without accompanying measures that demonstrate the federal government's commitment against corruption, the public would easily see through such fake sincerity and counterfeit necessity to cut costs," said Lim in a statement today.

azlan "Why should the people, especially lower-income groups, bear the pain of paying RM3.3 billion annually in increased petrol prices if no action is taken against those political bandits who steal the nation of RM51 billion annually?" he asked.

Lim said based on the experience of Pakatan Rakyat administrations in Penang and Selangor, at least 25 percent annual savings can be obtained from government procurement contracts.

He added that Penang has annual budget surpluses, increase in asset reserves by 50 percent and the reduction of the state government's debt by a record 95 percent.

"These attest to the effectiveness of integrity steps ranging from open competitive tenders to public declaration of assets," he said.

Lim said with an estimated RM201 billion in federal government procurement contracts annually, a minimum 25 percent savings would amount to RM51 billion.

He criticised the federal government of being "penny wise, pound foolish" by not focusing on the RM51 billion in potential savings.

He accused them of focussing instead on forcing 28 million Malaysians to bear the pain of RM3.3 billion from the petrol price increase of 20 percent, which was announced by Prime Minister Najib Razak on Monday.

"Instead of responding to such simple logic, the federal government would try to divert attention away from the inescapable conclusion by playing up racial, religious and extremist sentiments," Lim alleged.

'Four real problems of Malaysia'

Lim said such tactics are used by BN to avoid dealing with the four real problems of Malaysia namely, crime, corruption, rise in indebtedness of governments and individual households as well as the declining educational standards, productivity and skills of the Malaysian labour force.

He added that in Hong Kong, many investors and analysts identify that these four main issues have made Malaysia less attractive or even less competitive.

"The Penang government is boldly offering a model where performance is prized above political background.

"It is where concerted efforts are made to attract quality educational institutions at all levels.

"Where a honest and competent government in partnership with both the private and civil sector as well as a livable city that is safe, clean, green and healthy can provide a solution to these four problems," said Lim.

Lim was in Hong Kong for a business trip, where made these comments to the Penang diaspora living in Hong Kong.

He will be back in Penang today.

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