

Gov't should ensure prudence, urges MCA
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The government needs to do more in addition to its austerity measures to show that it is committed to ensure that taxpayers' funds are spent prudently, such as addressing wastage highlighted in the Auditor-General's Report 2012, said Labis MP Chua Tee Yong.

"Stern action, and not only lip service, must be adopted to ensure these excesses and leakages do not repeat in future.

"In addition to the cost-cutting measures, the government must embark on further cost reduction exercises to show its commitment in ensuring taxpayers' funds are spent accordingly," he said in a statement today.

Chua (left) was responding to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's announcement of 11 measures to cut public spending, effective yesterday.

Among others, he announced on Dec 30, 2013, that entertainment allowances of ministers, deputy ministers and top civil servants will be slashed by 10 percent, and there will be a moratorium on applications to renovate government offices.

"While this is a step in the right direction, it is crucial for Putrajaya to address the leakages and wastage as highlighted in the Auditor-General's Report 2012," Chua said.

He called on the government to practice open tender and award future projects on basis of merit to increase public confidence and ensure value for money.

In addition, he urged the government to implement its subsidy rationalisation drive in phases to ease its burden on the people, and disclose information regarding its impact.

"The disclosure of the study would enable consumers to help the government to monitor traders and ensure the Competition Act and Anti-Profiteering Act can be enforced more effectively.

"Without proper guidance and lack of stern action by authorities, these two Acts would be redundant as most traders are increasing or indicating an increase in the price of their goods.

"Only with proper knowledge, can the consumer gauge accurately the price increase of commodities by traders and report any abuse of trust," he added.

Chua, who is also the MCA vice president, also urged members of the public to be "fair" and not associate only BN to price hikes, but Pakatan Rakyat as well.

"A few good examples will be the (price increase) for water and car park in Penang. The Selangor state government salary hike (for their exco members and legislators was) as high as 373 percent and their latest business license that increased up to 400 percent," he said.

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