

No change to 30 percent bumi equity
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The National Economic Advisory Council (NEAC) seems to be passing the buck on the retention of the 30 percent bumiputera equity in the freshly unveiled second and final part of the New Economic Model (NEM), describing it as "government policy".

"That subject, to us, is a discussion which has already taken place as far as the government policies are concerned.

"For us, it is about implementation... (there) is clearly the need to further improve in terms of implementation. It must be transparent and market-friendly," NEAC chairperson Amirsham Abdul Aziz said this evening.

Addressing the media after the launch of the second part of the NEM at Putrajaya, Amirsham was reticent when asked whether the council supported the retention of the quota.

NONE"These are clearly, to me, some government policies that are with the government. I think the 30 percent policy is still with the prime minister now... we are not going to dispute that," Amirsham (right) said.

The second part of the NEM mentioned the quota despite the fact that the first part of the NEM, launched in March, had explicitly called for the scrapping of race-based quotas.

Faced with resistance from Malays soon after revealing the NEM in March, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak declared that his plan was only "a proposal" and that not everything would be implemented.

Gov't committed to most recommendations

However, Amirsham said he believed that the government would implement most of the more than 50 recommendations outlined in the NEM.

"From our engagement with the government, it appears that they are in agreement (with us). They are just trying to figure out the sequencing of what to implement first," he said.

NONEHe added that it was not important for all the proposals to be implemented, rather for the whole outcome to meet the goal of pushing the nation into a high economy status, while ensuring sustainability and inclusiveness.

In his keynote address, Najib said the government was committed to implement NEAC's recommendations, as was evident in the 10th Malaysia Plan.

"Positive actions have been in line with it's recommendations. I can assure you that this government is as they say, walking the talk.

"Implementation will follow... and (the model) must be implemented flawlessly. Planning must be meticulous and execution flawless," Najib said.

He added that there would always be "sceptics and detractors, but action and results are the best way to sway them".

Despite the apparent disconnect on the equity quota issue between the two parts of the NEM, Amirsham in his speech said that the parts needed to be read together for the policy to be seen in its entirety.

He said no major changes were made to the second part, compared to the first, and that NEAC's major challenge would be how to incorporate the abundant public feedback.

"Some (of the groups engaged) were cooperative and accommodative, some were highly opinionated and at times hostile, coming out strong, all guns firing - but more encouragingly, none was indifferent.

"The elements of a 'balancing act' came into the picture at almost every juncture of the work," Amirsham added.

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