

Use govt funds prudently, says PM

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Unnecessary spending must stop with efforts redirected to help rakyat

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PUTRAJAYA: Lavish events and celebrations should be done away with to avoid wastage, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has told ministries and agencies in a new order.

He said he also wanted them not to go all-out to prepare for programmes, for example, by making new clothes or presenting him with batik shirts to officiate at their events.

“I want this practice to stop. If any batik attire needs to be given, give it to the low-ranking staff so they can get it for free.

“Please do not give it to me or the minister or the secretary-general,” he said when launching the National Hawkers and Petty Traders Conference yesterday.

Anwar said while “some might regard this as a small matter, small savings like these could still have a big impact on funds.

“When I announced that I would not be taking my salary or (official)



In appreciation: Anwar presenting the ‘Jasamu Dikenang’ award to Datin Salmah Marsidin, the wife of the late Datuk Ramli Norani. Looking on are Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives Minister Datuk Ewon Benedick (left) and Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC) secretary-general Datuk Seri Suriani Ahmad.
— MUHAMAD SHAHRIL ROSLI/The Star

car, some people said this was just a small thing.

“While this may be small to some, the money can be returned to the

people,” he added.

When he was first appointed Prime Minister, Anwar said he would not receive any salary and

had also refused a Mercedes S600 vehicle that was purchased and obtained by the Prime Minister’s Department before he came into office.

Citing a review of the RM15bil flood mitigation project that resulted in savings of RM1.8bil of government funds, he said his administration was committed to good governance and leadership to avoid leakages.

On Dec 6, Anwar said that RM7bil approved for flood mitigation initiatives would not proceed and would undergo a review as it was found to have been approved through direct negotiations and not through tenders.

The previous administration had announced the Flood Mitigation Plan until 2030 as a long-term strategy to adapt to climate change.

His administration, said Anwar, was committed to ensuring no wastage and that funds be used prudently.

“I hope you will be able to witness this new culture of avoiding wastage and unnecessary expendi-

ture. This is what we are committed to do, which you will see now and in years to come,” he said.

Anwar also said that while he would not be announcing new initiatives for hawkers and petty traders, he was committed to ensuring funds reach them.

He said the government was aware that many, particularly petty traders, were still struggling with the aftereffects of Covid-19 adding that his administration wanted to resolve the situation and ease their hardship.

Agencies that were meant to facilitate small and medium enterprises must do their part by focusing and prioritising the needs of small businesses, which contribute significantly to the economy, Anwar added.

“I am concerned over claims that it is hard for them to obtain capital to start a business and to get the local council’s green light and licence to do business.

“This also needs to stop. Those given the responsibility to help must do so,” he said.