

PM spices up speech with linguistic prowess

KUALA LUMPUR: When Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaks at official events or political programmes, the prime minister often demonstrates his linguistic prowess by referencing classical texts in his speeches, leaving a lasting impression on the people.

Yesterday was no exception when Anwar, who is also finance minister, quoted philosophers when he tabled the 2024 Budget in the Dewan Rakyat.

His speech, which was more than two hours long, was filled with references to Chinese and Tamil classical poetry.

This includes quotes from Confucian philosopher Mencius, who is also known as Mengzi or “Master Meng” in China.

“Chinese philosopher Mengzi outlined four main pillars as the foundation of moral strength.

“They are *ren*, which is righteousness, *yi*, which is propriety, *zhi*, which is wisdom, and *li*, which is custom.

“These are the inner strengths that will bolster the efforts of this government to carry out reforms to put an end to the woes enveloping the people, eradicate systemic corrupt practices, reduce bureaucracy to ensure speedy implementation of



Employees watching the tabling of the 2024 Budget at an electronics store in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD

projects for the public, as well as nurture political stability.”

Anwar then quoted the classic Tamil text, *Thirukkural*, when he emphasised the importance of elevating the quality of life of the people in the country.

“*Iyatralum eettalum kaatthalum kaattha vaguthalum vallathu arasu*” he said.

Loosely translated, this means: “Anyone with the capability of generating wealth from various sources of income, channelling it to a central place, safeguarding

the accumulated wealth and managing expenditure of the accumulated wealth in a proper manner is a king.”

Anwar said the income generated by the federal government through the restructuring of the economy and fiscal policy would be exhausted wisely to improve the livelihood of the people.

“Emphasis will continue to be given to providing direct cash assistance to the needy, apart from providing education, health and basic infrastructure to all.”