

'CIVIL SERVICE SALARY REVIEW TO TAKE TIME'

All agencies to give input to ensure comprehensive administrative reforms, says PM

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THE study on the Public Service Remuneration System and administrative reform will take more than six months, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Speaking at the Prime Minister's Department's October assembly yesterday, Anwar said he wanted to give an opportunity to all departments and sectors to give their input.

"We cannot do a normal study, it has to be a comprehensive one. I want all summaries to reach our tables so it can be discussed.

"Naturally, this will take longer than usual. If we want a serious study on civil service reform, which includes salary increment for civil servants, it will take more than six months."

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said this was a signal to civil servants that the government paid attention to their plight.

"It is illogical for us to hope for high performance and productivity but the remuneration does not increase. And this is the same for the private sector, too.

"I hope the study can be completed by the middle of next year so that we can make an important announcement in the next budget.

"While we are completing the study, I have announced early incentive payments of RM2,000 and RM1,000 each as recognition for their service," he added.

When the 2024 Budget was unveiled on Friday, Anwar had announced an early incentive payment of RM2,000 to each civil servant in Grades 56 and below, including those on contract.

He said public sector employees, including uniformed personnel such as the police and military, would also receive RM1,000 each.

All government pensioners, including pensioned or non-pen-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaking at the Prime Minister's Department monthly assembly in Putrajaya yesterday. With him are Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (left) and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuld Ali. PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

sioned, would also receive RM1,000.

These payments would be made in one lump sum at the end of February.

Anwar also said the government would continue giving subsidies to the people, but with better targeting to ensure only the needy would benefit.

He said the country's subsidy bill could reach RM81 billion, one of the highest in the world.

"We cannot (totally) cut subsidies, because prices will spike and the people on the ground will be affected.

"Subsidies will be continued but it will be restructured so that the super rich and foreigners will not enjoy them the most," he said.

Anwar reiterated that the government would save RM4.6 billion by reducing electricity subsidies for the wealthy, a move which would affect only 10 per cent of the population.

He also said the government had spent RM3.6 billion to control the prices of eggs and chicken for a prolonged period, adding that in the past, these items were subsidised only during festive seasons.

"When I was finance minister (in the 1990s), we would only give subsidies (for eggs and chicken) during festivities such as Hari Raya, Chinese New Year, or other festive celebrations, when the

prices of these items would increase. But now, we provide these subsidies all year round."

When tabling the budget, Anwar had announced that the government would halt price controls on eggs and chicken.

The move was aimed at allowing the market to operate more freely and ensure an adequate supply of these items.

He had said the current trend showed that the supply of eggs and chicken had stabilised and the present retail price was lower than the ceiling price.

Meanwhile, Anwar urged civil servants to save electricity usage at government offices.

He said small acts, such as switching off the lights, could result in huge savings for the government.

"We always see (wastage) in other forms... but we forget about how we use electricity in our offices, as if our fathers are paying for it.

"These are public funds. When I was finance minister (in the 1990s) and had outdoor assemblies at our office in Jalan Duta, I would see that some lights were still left on.

"We are out for an hour, so why must the lights be on? It's not your money, it's public funds," he said.

Anwar said he hoped using electricity prudently would be a culture in all government offices.