



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim visiting a booth showcasing Huawei's 5G technology after the closing of the Huawei Malaysia ICT Summit in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD

NON-COMMITTAL

PM WILL 'THINK FIRST' ABOUT CABINET RESHUFFLE

There are claims that Anwar will not just fill vacancy, but also replace few underperforming ministers

DAWN CHAN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

"THINK first." That was the brief answer Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim gave when asked about a possible cabinet reshuffle.

He said he would ponder over it while pointing to his temple, declining to take further questions from reporters.

He said this after delivering his closing remarks at the Huawei Malaysia ICT Summit at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre here yesterday.

Speculation about a possible cabinet reshuffle surfaced more than a week ago.

It was sparked by the vacancy in the domestic trade and cost of

living minister's post following the death of Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub on July 23.

There were claims that Anwar would not just fill the vacancy, but would "kill two birds with one stone" by replacing several underperforming ministers.

It was widely speculated that several secretaries-general would also be transferred.

On Sept 25, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali announced the transfer of four secretaries-general and the appointment of a new one.

On another matter, Anwar said having dual 5G networks would allow for more effective participation from China's Huawei, departing from a decision years ago to have only a single network.

He said it was crucial for Malaysia, as a young nation, to allow fair competition and to benefit from the best of technologies from both western and eastern countries.

He said it was not an easy decision due to the conventional mindset surrounding security and capacity threats.

"We in Malaysia... and I believe rightly, decided that while we get the best from the West, we also should benefit (from) the best from the East,"

He said it was crucial that 5G networks were sustainable and inclusive for society, benefiting every Malaysian.

He said under the Madani philosophy, technology change or transformation would not be seen as sustainable if it could not be accessed by every single citizen.

"In our 5G network, we made it clear that it is not just a matter of technology, but ensuring every single citizen, from the urban to the most remote area in Sabah and Sarawak, must be given the opportunity to access and connectivity.

"Otherwise, to my mind, that is not sustainable. Sustainability is not to benefit a few urban elite."

He said digital transformation needed a new mindset and attitude and the ease of doing business must improve.

He said he stressed at this week's cabinet meeting that from his work trip to the United Nations General Assembly in New York, he knew that Malaysia had the potential to progress further.

"In New York, you can sense the enthusiasm of potential investors for Malaysia. But we will have to respond accordingly, not only through digital transformation, but the ease of doing business and clarity in policy."