

Anwar urges paradigm shift to enhance transparency

KUALA LUMPUR: Federal statutory bodies must make a “paradigm shift” and enhance transparency in their operations, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said while statutory bodies have shown overall good performance, there is room for improvement to ensure they do not deviate from their original objectives.

He cited an example reported by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi where an agency established to

help the poor had 79 subsidiaries unrelated to its core purpose, with 50 of them incurring losses.

“The chairmen of the board of directors (BOD) still receive fixed allowances.

“Say a BOD chairman receives a fixed monthly allowance of RM5,000 or a minimum of RM1,000, if he chairs the BOD of all 79 subsidiaries, he could easily get a minimum of RM79,000 a month,” Anwar said when launching the guidelines on the management and governance of federal

statutory bodies yesterday, Bernama reported.

The Prime Minister said governance failure and violations could happen regardless of whether the chairmen were politicians, professionals or civil servants.

“It is the same among professionals too. They can be professional cheaters.

“We just need those who were appointed, either politicians, professionals or civil servants, to follow the rules and be monitored

more closely, especially by representatives of the Finance Ministry, Auditor-General and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission,” he said.

Anwar said this is to avoid governance violations and corruption, adding that the government will explore providing additional resources to expand audit mechanisms at all levels of government.

The Prime Minister also reiterated the need for greater transparency as these statutory bodies are crucial for economic growth,

especially those established to assist the bumiputra community.

“It is the violation of regulations and the tendency to make excessive profits causing the rights and interests of bumiputra to be betrayed, this is what we are worried about,” he said.

The launch of the new guidelines on the management and governance of federal statutory bodies are aimed at providing a framework to strengthen their oversight and internal audit functions.