

FRAMEWORK OF BUDGET

# 'BENEFITS MUST REACH THE GRASSROOTS'

**PM calls on highly profitable institutions to consider plight of the needy**

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**T**HE framework of the country's budget and governance is not only aimed at stimulating growth but also ensuring that its benefits reach the grassroots, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. The prime minister said digital and energy transformations should benefit all segments of society, and called for measures, particularly in highly profitable institutions such as banks, to consider the plight of the poorest workers. "What are they eating, where do they live, and how much do they earn? Departments must al-

so take into account the families of drivers and caretakers who are most underprivileged.

"This is the framework of the budget and the nation. While we offer incentives to stimulate growth and attract investments, we must not forget that the benefits must also reach the grassroots," said Anwar, who is also finance minister, during the Finance Ministry's monthly assembly here yesterday.

Present were Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan and Treasury secretary-general Datuk Johan Mahmood Merican.

During the presentation of the 2025 Budget in the Dewan Negara on Wednesday, Anwar had said that despite the country's stronger-than-expected growth, such achievements should not lead to complacency within the government service.

"As people, our abilities are commendable, but sometimes we feel we have already done our best.

"As such, the public service must strive for excellence, there should be no limits, and efforts



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim Anwar, who is also finance minister, speaking during the ministry's monthly assembly in Putrajaya yesterday, BERNAMA PIC



Malaysians at the Madani government's second anniversary celebration at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre last month. BERNAMA PIC

should continuously aim for the highest standards of performance.

"For instance, in the digital sector, efficiency and management across all departments, our focus

should not only be on finding better methods but also on engaging in seminars and discussions with external thinkers who can provide insights into weaknesses that need to be ad-

dressed," he said.

Anwar also cautioned that arrogance and condescension were not limited to those ignorant of religion.

Drawing an example from the incident in Indonesia where a preacher, during his sermon, insulted a tea seller, he said even those well-versed in religious teachings — those who often discuss Islam, faith, prayer, and sunnah — could lack manners when faced with certain situations.

"The incident went viral, with the preacher mocking one of the poorest groups of people — tea sellers — while laughing. This sparked widespread public attention, prompting (Indonesian) President Prabowo (Subianto) to issue a stern statement.

"Eventually, the preacher visited the tea seller in the area and apologised.

"I found it peculiar and extraordinary. However, to me, the lesson here is a humbling one, and I felt I needed to highlight this today," he said.