



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim meeting civil servants after the Prime Minister's Department's monthly assembly in Putrajaya yesterday, PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

EFFICIENT DECISION-MAKING

EMULATE SAUDIS, PM TELLS CIVIL SERVANTS

Anwar praises Gulf kingdom's prompt approval of investments that help spur economy

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DATUK Seri Anwar Ibrahim has urged civil servants to emulate Saudi Arabia's proactive and efficient decision-making in approving investments.

Sharing his experience on his recent visit to Riyadh, the prime minister praised Saudi Arabia's efficiency in managing investments to boost its economy.

He said he witnessed this during a meeting with the ACWA Power company together with Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan and officials from the Malaysian Investment Development Authority.

"In terms of efficiency, Saudi Arabia used to be one of the slow countries. At a recent meeting with ACWA Power around 9 to 9.30 in the morning, they told me of their interest (to invest) and I also expressed my commitment.

"As this is a government linked company, they needed the approval of the prime minister, who is also Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

"At 8pm the same day, before I left for home, they gave us the green light to continue the investment," he said at the Prime Minister's Department monthly assembly here yesterday. Present was Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

Anwar said he was impressed with the speed of implementation in Saudi Arabia, which Malaysia must emulate.

"That's why I urge my friends, especially government (linked) companies and civil servants to understand (what needs to be done)," he said.

Bernama also reported that Anwar urged civil servants to maintain their integrity to justify their salary increase under the Public Service Remuneration System.

He said civil servants should identify those who tarnished the service.

"SO, I ask that while we provide a somewhat radical shift in terms of recognition and rewards to civil servants, you should monitor your departments and colleagues to identify those who tarnish the reputation of civil servants.

"There is a small group involved in corruption, absenteeism and various problems. Should we treat this small group the same way? My answer is, no, we will not provide the same treatment," he said.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said the government had raised the salaries of civil servants even though the country had yet to recover from economic uncertainties and problems such as leakages and corruption.

"If we follow standard economic theory, all salary increases

should be postponed until the economy is more stable, meaning less debt.

"But I see it from the perspective of Madani, compassion, humanity, efficiency and sustainability. Why should we burden civil servants for mistakes not of their making but sometimes due to mismanagement and negligence by many others?" he said.

"It is appropriate for us as the father figure in the large government family to make the bold decision (to increase civil service salaries)."

Anwar said increasing civil service salaries was to instil confidence in public sector workers that the Madani government was serious about finding the best way to help them.

He expressed confidence that the Dewan Rakyat would approve the civil service wage hike in October, when the 2025 Budget will be tabled.

"There are some who say (the wage hike) is not settled and Parliament might not approve it.

"I would like to know which member of parliament would object. Even if they oppose, we have Pakatan Harapan, Barisan Nasional, Gabungan Parti Sarawak and Gabungan Rakyat Sabah to give us a two-thirds majority," he said.

At the national Labour Day celebration on May 1, Anwar announced a civil service salary hike of more than 13 per cent, effective this December, involving an allocation of more than RM10 billion.

He had said the move would ensure that the lowest ranking civil servant would earn at least RM2,000 a month.