

'GOVT SAVED RM800,000 ON PM'S FLIGHTS'

Business delegates covered 73pc of cost of RM6.162m for flights to 5 countries, says Fahmi

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THE government saved nearly RM1 million on charter flights for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's official visits to five countries, said unity government spokesman Fahmi Fadzil.

He said of the total cost of RM6.162 million for the flights, the government covered RM1.662 million (27 per cent) and business delegates covered RM4.5 million (73 per cent).

He said using charter flights for

the prime minister's travels was cost effective, saving the government about RM800,000, as using existing aircraft would have cost RM2.5 million.

"The prime minister's flights were covered by the government, while the business delegates paid for their own travel."

Fahmi said companies involved in the trips intend to invest in the countries visited — China, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Peru and Brazil.

He cited Petronas' US\$6 billion investment in Brazil as an example of the strategic economic interests that accompanied these diplomatic missions.

The visits aimed to strengthen bilateral ties and explore investment opportunities for Malaysia.

On the Gig Workers' Economy Bill that was slated for presentation in Parliament next month, he said: "The human resources minister has decided to delay the bill to allow for further engage-

ment with industry stakeholders."

The delay came after gig economy platforms like Foodpanda, Grab and Lalamove expressed the need for more comprehensive consultations.

"We are committed to ensuring all parties, including gig workers and platform operators, have a voice in shaping this important legislation," Fahmi said.

He said the government was considering introducing several bills, some of which were expected to be tabled in the first parliamentary session of next year.

One of them is the Malaysian Media Council Bill, which is nearing completion.

"This bill is in its final stages. We hope to present it for its first reading during the current session," Fahmi said.

On Johor's proposal for a four-and-a-half-day workweek for public sector employees, he said the matter was not discussed in

the cabinet meeting, but might be addressed during the Malaysia-Singapore Annual Leaders' Retreat on Dec 8 and 9.

Recently, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi proposed a shorter workweek to enhance public sector productivity.

"The Johor government is looking into improving service delivery through digital empowerment and a more efficient work structure," said Fahmi.

On the government being given a "D" grade by the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (Bersih) in its two-year performance evaluation report, Fahmi said the government was set to table several bills that reflected its commitment to institutional reform.

He said the government took feedback seriously and strived to improve the quality of its services while advancing reforms.

"I welcome Bersih's response to the prime minister's statement in Parliament. I have reviewed the

remarks by Bersih's chairman.

"The government values the input of all parties and remains committed to enhancing institutional reforms and improvements moving forward.

"In the remaining parliamentary session, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said will table several bills that reflect the government's dedication to institutional reforms and strengthening the governance."

On Tuesday, Bersih said it gave the government a "D" for its performance in the past two years due to limited progress on key reforms despite strong parliamentary support.

Bersih chairman Faisal Abdul Aziz said the grade reflected the government's struggle to bridge the gap between rhetoric and action on promised reforms.

Anwar said he was optimistic the rating would improve.