

NDI TO BE USED AS BENCHMARK

Using net disposable income is suitable because it reduces errors in identifying beneficiaries and is more equitable, says Anwar

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NET disposable income (NDI) will now be used as the basis to identify target groups for assistance in the government's efforts to eliminate poverty.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the government's plan to shift to the NDI measurement would reduce errors in identifying beneficiaries and was more equitable.

This was among the five strategies to end poverty, which were outlined in the National Symposium to End Poverty here yesterday.

"NDI will take into account the reasonable living expenditure.

"Reasonable living expenditure refers to the cost of living needed to maintain a dignified and decent life, including expenses for food, clothing, housing, utilities and transportation, which vary by location and household demographics," Anwar said.

He said reforming funds would be the second strategy in eliminating poverty.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim launching the National Symposium to End Poverty in Putrajaya yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said the government was committed to continuing fiscal reforms as part of its strategy to restructure the economy towards sustainability.

He said this included revising the subsidy framework to prioritise targeted subsidies and assistance, including social aid and poverty programmes.

"The government encourages contributions from various parties through the involvement of government-linked companies, government-linked investment companies, the private sector and third sector in joint financing initiatives to support community-based solutions."

Anwar said the third effort was related to data integration.

He said this included cross-checking and regular updates from agencies that distributed aid. He added that this would ensure that the aid reached the people who deserved them.

He said next year, the government aimed to use the Central Database Hub (Padu) as the basis for determining eligibility for assistance, and enhance data-driven decision-making initiatives.

The fourth strategy, said Anwar, focused on changing attitudes and mindsets, while the fifth emphasised strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty.

Anwar said he wanted a reevaluation of government funding for the poor to ensure that aid was managed accordingly.

He cited an example of some

agencies aimed at eradicating poverty, but allocating 80 per cent of their funds for management costs.

"Each time there is an event abroad, a significant amount is spent. This is why we are taking a strong stance on this issue... because it is a culture of wrongdoing, not following rules."

Anwar called for frequent monitoring, while describing the current procedure as "blatantly biased and unjust".

"Otherwise, whenever we meet, there are (always) requests for more funding. Tell me which country can provide additional funding for this?"

"This is why we need to combat corruption... it is not something to be taken lightly," he said.