

Improving public-private partnerships

Anwar: Pikas 2030 aims to strengthen governance, drive economic growth

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CYBERJAYA: Much remains to be done in ensuring good governance, particularly in maintaining transparency and accountability in public-private partnerships (PPP) projects, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

With that in mind, the Prime Minister said the newly unveiled Public-Private Partnership Master Plan 2030 (Pikas 2030) will strengthen Malaysia's economic development and governance through unwavering principles.

Anwar acknowledged that since the implementation of the PPP in 1991, many plans were drawn up during his tenure as deputy prime minister and finance minister, but much still needs to be improved in terms of governance.

Out of the 510 PPP projects carried out to date, he said, the majority followed stringent procedures although some displayed

weaknesses due to failure to adhere to the prescribed methods.

"The contributions of PPP are indisputable, such as its contribution of over RM50.5bil to the gross domestic product (GDP) and the creation of more than 600,000 jobs. These are commendable and encouraging figures.

"However, believe me, these figures alone are not enough to mesmerise us or propel the nation to developed status. They are merely a starting point," he said when launching Pikas 2030 at Multimedia University here yesterday.

Also present were Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari and Public-Private Partnership Unit (Ukas) director-general Muhammad Razman Abu Samah.

According to Anwar, changes must be made in terms of methods

and approaches if the country is to become a key contributor and driving force in realising a new Malaysia with the potential to be great and advanced.

"A post-normal era demands different approaches; we cannot rely on 20-year-old plans to achieve progress over the next decade.

"What we refer to as the post-normal era requires rapid change, just like technology with AI, which can bring about transformation in the blink of an eye," he said.

One of the notable changes introduced under Pikas 2030 is the shift towards a competitive bidding process for PPP projects through Requests for Proposals.

Anwar stressed that the move is part of the government's ongoing commitment to good governance, ensuring that projects are awarded transparently and based on merit.

"The success of a PPP depends

on good governance. These projects must be free from corruption and managed to the highest standards," he added.

Anwar also hinted at future reforms, including the possible corporatisation of Ukas, and new legislation to formalise PPP governance.

"We must take a 'whole-of-nation' approach. The government needs the private sector, and the private sector needs the government. Together, we can build a progressive nation for all," he said.

Commenting further on Pikas 2030, he said the strategic plan sets ambitious targets, with an expected RM78bil increase in private investment, RM82bil contribution to the GDP and the creation of 900,000 jobs by 2030.

Anwar highlighted that any privatisation project must consider three key areas: wages, housing and the education of workers' children.

"When we embarked on privatisation, we recorded significant progress, but we often neglected the fundamental framework and direction of the nation.

"That is why, in the Pikas project, the principles of governance must be resolute, firm and intolerant of any form of misconduct.

"There must also be consideration for the workers' families who help build these companies. This means wages, housing and education should align with the company's capabilities," he said.

Meanwhile, in his speech earlier, Amirudin said the implementation of PPP projects has spurred economic development in Selangor, contributing RM71bil in private investment to the state.

The projects include the Shah Alam Expressway, the Sungai Besi-Ulu Kelang Elevated Expressway, the Damansara-Shah Alam Elevated Expressway, the Kinrara Fire and Rescue Station West Port, and North Port.