

PM: Improve national audits

Anwar urges faster, more effective system for public benefit

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PUTRAJAYA: The national audit system must adopt a faster, more accurate approach that is focused on delivering impactful outcome for the people, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said reforms in the national auditing system, which are ongoing, must be both sophisticated and comprehensive.

"I urge everyone here to ensure auditing continues, but it must focus on maximum impact, not merely as a routine exercise, but in a way that is more effective and delivers real benefits to the public," he said in his speech during the launch of the 120th Anniversary Celebration of the National Audit Department here yesterday.

"Even with a strong and transparent system, delays create opportunities for leakages. Auditing must therefore be swift and accurate," he said.

Anwar also pointed out the importance of public perception in auditing.

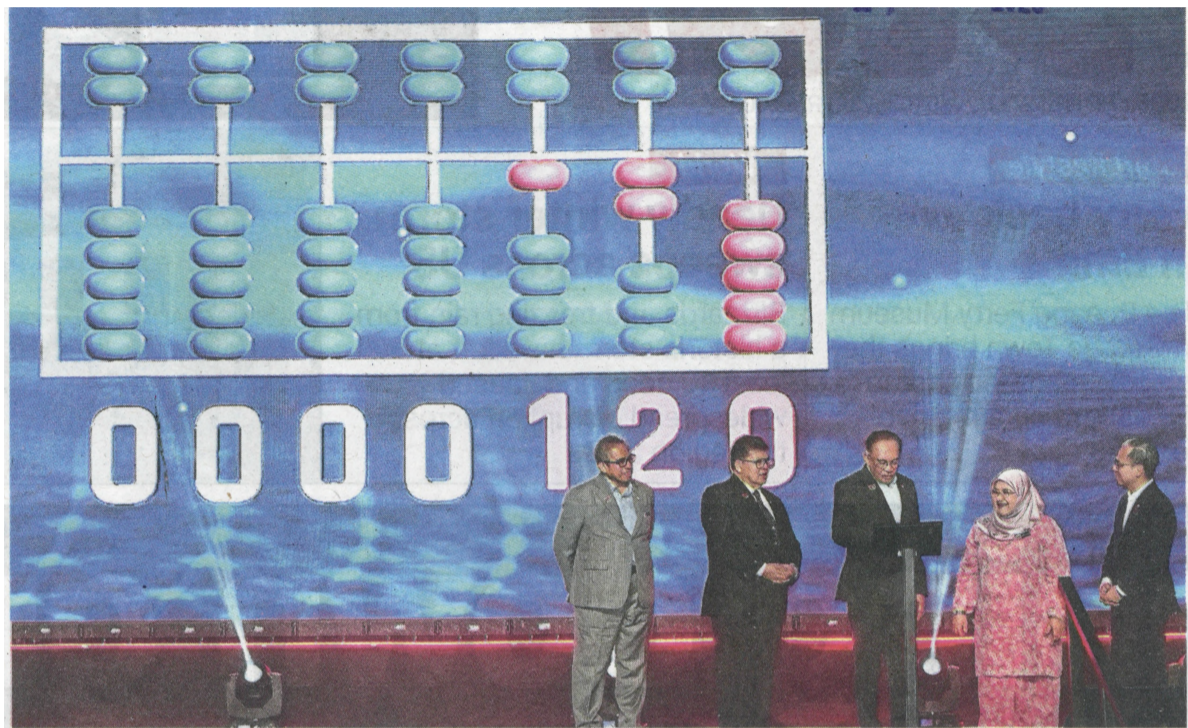
"Auditing must not be seen as burdensome. It should be approachable and understandable.

"Sometimes, new systems are perceived as cumbersome, especially by those accustomed to inefficiency or malpractice.

"This requires the Auditor-General and the entire department to engage with the public, understand their concerns and earn their trust. This is crucial," he said.

The Prime Minister added that he wants to remove the perception among some quarters that auditing is a burden.

"The system must be communicated as a proactive effort to



Celebrating accountability: Anwar at the launch ceremony of the National Audit Department's 120th Anniversary Celebration in Putrajaya. With him is Auditor-General of Malaysia Datuk Seri Wan Suraya Wan Mohd Radzi (second from right). - RAJA FAISAL HISHAN/The Star

improve governance. If we want the nation to develop with more effective, efficient, transparent and beneficial systems, the challenge is to bridge understanding with the public," he said.

"Sometimes, there is a gap between our good intentions and the reality on the ground.

"This concerns me, because even well-designed programmes can fail if they are poorly understood or not embraced by the public, leading to tension and misunderstanding," he added.

Anwar also called for new initiatives, including digitalisation and outreach to lower levels, so that auditing is not seen as intimidating.

He said continuous engagement with the public is necessary to ensure they understand that auditing is essential for national progress.

"Beyond what has been mentioned, we must also focus on new

approaches. The audit system must be dynamic. If we remain stuck in old ways of thinking and outdated performance levels, we will not move forward," he said.

The Prime Minister urged all parties to maintain a positive drive for improvement.

"We must constantly reflect, identify gaps where leakages may occur and address areas of delay.

"These are key points I wish to emphasise," he said.

Anwar also called on other government departments to recognise that national success comes with improved governance and full commitment.

"The Auditor-General knows, and even I sometimes feel uneasy reading reports, especially when some findings are unpopular. But these must be clarified to prevent confusion," he said.

"Ultimately, what matters is that we continue to move forward decisively and courageously, ensuring the country remains on the right path."

Meanwhile, when asked about the ringgit's strongest performance, Anwar said: "Alhamdulillah."

The ringgit opened at 3.9850/

9950 against the greenback at 8am yesterday, strengthening from last Friday's close of 4.0045/0080. The currency last traded at a similar level on May 24, 2018, when it touched 3.9797 against the US dollar.

The ringgit's rise followed improved risk appetite after Bank Negara Malaysia maintained the Overnight Policy Rate, coupled with a weaker US dollar index.

On Saturday, Anwar was reported as saying that the ringgit's strength - now among the best performing in Asia - reflects the effectiveness of sound governance, political stability and growing investor confidence in Malaysia's economic direction.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, added that the stronger ringgit is also the outcome of the government's continued efforts to safeguard national stability, ensure efficient administration and take firm action against corruption and misappropriation.