

Anwar: Pakatan to renegotiate IPP deals, revamp Felda once in power
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

PETALING JAYA, Jan 6 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) will immediately renegotiate all “lopsided” agreements with independent power producers (IPPs) and revamp national land development authority Felda once it is elected into federal power, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has said.

The PKR de facto leader said that these would be one of PR’s immediate priorities, and charged that wastage of federal funds had reached an alarming level.

“We need to renegotiate all agreements that are clearly lopsided, IPP deals must be renegotiated so that it is more transparent, and that it is not a burden to consumers,” Anwar (picture) told The Malaysian Insider this week ahead of the January 9 verdict for his second sodomy trial.

The federal opposition has accused Putrajaya of lopsided deals with IPPs, and has alleged the move favoured private energy companies.

But Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has insisted IPPs would not benefit from the increase in electricity tariffs.

Putrajaya had in June last year raised electricity prices by an average 7.12 per cent in an effort to trim its burgeoning subsidy bill, but promised the hike will not affect some 75 per cent of domestic consumers.

But public anger ahead of an expected general election has been fuelled by rising cost of living as inflation has persisted at over three per cent since March, a two-year high.

The government had said back then that despite the tariff hikes, it will still spend some RM26 billion in subsidies.

Anwar claimed that there was a need to revamp the current management board of Felda (Federal Land Development Authority), saying that it must be led by “credible professionals” to avoid “undue political interference”, alluding to former minister Tan Sri Isa Samad’s current tenure as its chairman.

PR leaders and some Felda settlers have questioned the appointment of the former Negri Sembilan menteri besar as Felda Investment Co-operative (KPF) chief, pointing out the clashes between the Prime Minister’s Office and Co-operatives Commission of Malaysia (CCM).

The appointment of Isa as KPF chairman is being challenged on the grounds that the former Umno vice-president is a “contract worker” and not a member of the co-operative whose membership is limited to settlers and permanent Felda staff.

The profitable Felda Holdings has a workforce of some 19,000 employees, with a labour

force of 46,795 workers at 300 estates, 70 palm oil mills, seven refineries, four kernel crushing plants, 13 rubber factories, manufacturing plants and several logistic and bulking installations spread throughout Malaysia and several locations overseas.

Anwar also touted the various successes of PR states as reasons why voters should back the opposition in the next general election. The pact rules Kelantan, Kedah, Penang and Selangor.

"Compared to 50 years of Umno rule, look at the progress we have brought to the states under our rule.

"We have more credible leaders, and we will put an end to racism and race-based politics," the Permatang Pauh MP said.

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