

**Pakatan doubts Putrajaya's ability to execute education plan**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**September 12, 2012**  
**By Ida Lim**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 12 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders have questioned whether the government is able to implement its new education blueprint unveiled yesterday and improve Malaysia's quality of education.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said that there was a gap "between pronouncements and capacity to act".

"I don't believe the Umno/BN government has capacity to act on recommendations... by consultants although it may sound impressive," the PKR de facto leader said at a press conference today.

Anwar said the prime minister's approach is to "pay consultants with huge fees to come up with impressive blueprints", pointing to the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) as examples.

He claimed that corruption still persists and government contracts are still given out without tenders despite the introduction of the GTP and ETP.

DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang said that the past education ministers all came up with "one blueprint after another", but the quality of education in Malaysia has still fallen.

"But if BN is serious about education...(it) should set up a Parliamentary Select Committee on education so MPs of all parties can give their views and make a report on recommendations," Lim said.

He also said that PR would need to study the blueprint before making a stand.

Anwar also said that the opposition pact will scrutinise the blueprint during Parliament's next sitting in September.

The deputy prime minister today cautioned against prejudice towards the government's new education blueprint and asked for all parties to look through the report before making up their mind.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin also said the public can still give its feedback on the new education masterplan, which will run from 2013 to 2025, during the Education Ministry's Open Day next month.

The education master plan report is available for free from the Ministry of Education's website.

Yesterday, Parent Action Group for Education Malaysia (PAGE) chairman Datin Noor Azimah Abdul Rahim had labelled the new education blueprint as a simple "rebranding exercise" despite the inclusion of terms such as "transformation" and "review".

She also criticised the blueprint's advisory panel for not emphasising the importance of English, singling out the consultants from South Korea and Singapore.

The Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) think tank had criticised Putrajaya for omitting four critical reports — commissioned at a cost of millions of taxpayers' ringgit — necessary to determine the credibility of the plan.

In the new masterplan launched yesterday, Malaysia aims to be in the top third of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test within the next 13 years. The country is currently ranked in the bottom third.

The education masterplan comprises 11 "shifts" to inculcate six attributes in children: knowledge, thinking skills, leadership, bilingual proficiency, ethics and national identity.

The shifts include empowering state and district education departments and schools to customise solutions based on need and recruiting only the top 30 per cent of graduates for teacher training.

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