

Pakatan pledges to focus on household income not equity targets
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 1 — The national economic plan should shift from only meeting equity targets and growth to ensuring a minimum household income of RM4,000 a month by the end of a first-term Pakatan Rakyat (PR) administration, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

He also said economic growth should be generated by small and medium-sized businesses and not just by “one or two big bosses.”

Speaking in Parliament, the opposition leader pitched his PR’s Budget 2013 proposal to focus on disposal income instead of chasing equity and growth targets.

“The statement has been distorted until some end up making assumptions that PR had promised to pay compensation to the people until their minimum household income reaches the target of RM4,000 a month,” Anwar said.

“The approach should instead emphasise sustained economic development and ensure there is increase in the people’s disposable income,” he said when debating the government’s Budget 2013 proposals.

Anwar stressed family household income levels were important key economic targets to ensure nobody was left out of mainstream development and the nation’s prosperity.

“The welfare and well-being of those in the community who require help and protection so as to not be marginalised is the government’s responsibility through an integrated social safety system,” he said.

“The economic prosperity of the majority with continuous revenue levels ensures sustainable growth when they continue to invest in the country’s economy,” he added.

Anwar also said economic growth must be generated by small and medium-sized entrepreneurs “who form the largest business class in the economy”, and not only “one or two big bosses or the person who monopolises most economic activities”.

“The government’s role in the economy should be restricted to generating growth in new areas and to accelerate economic activities strategically, and not get involved in every type of economic activity and competing with small businesses and the entrepreneurs,” he said.

Last week, Anwar had promised to raise the disposable income of Malaysians through measures such as cheaper car prices, abolishment of tolls and waiver of student loans.

He said a PR government would be able to pay for the proposed measures not through raising taxes but by plugging leakages that arise as a result of inefficiencies and corruption.

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