

**Race-based policies must end, says Anwar**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**September 26, 2012**  
**By Lisa J Ariffin**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 26 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim pledged today that a Pakatan Rakyat (PR) government would put an end to race-based policies as he said the current preferential treatment for Bumiputeras had been abused to enrich cronies.

He also promised a “new phase of competitiveness and open tenders” to help Malaysia regain its edge, as part of PR’s alternative Budget 2013 proposals he unveiled in Parliament today.

“Race-based policies must end...we will continue to help the poor to get facilities like microcredit. Who benefits the most? The Malays. They have the most people, so even if you give help to an Indian person, it won’t affect the majority who are Malays,” he told reporters today.

PR’s Budget proposals, which include promises to raise disposable income by cutting car taxes, abolish road tolls and waive student loans, were announced today ahead of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak’s official announcement on Friday of the government’s plans for spending and taxes next year.

PR’s proposals will put pressure on BN as the country braces for what is expected to be its most keenly contested general election in the next few months.

Najib also is expected to announce equally populist policies on Friday as he seeks to lead his Barisan Nasional (BN) to a strong mandate and will need to aggressively court voters to his side.

Najib is expected to announce more cash handouts for the poor and introduce policies to help Malaysians afford homes.

Anwar said today that Bumiputera policies had been abused to enrich a minority of Malaysians, and appeared to take a swipe at his old nemesis Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

“Now the children of a former PM control billions of rights for petroleum. Bumiputera rights have to benefit larger numbers of people. Does this mean therefore ignoring poor marginalised communities? No. That’s why our proposals take into consideration the need for qualified Bumiputeras to compete. Malaysia cannot regain its competitiveness if we do not move to enhance its competitiveness,” he said.

Asked if PR would reduce government subsidies if they were to take over Putrajaya, Anwar said his coalition would first have to adopt more transparent policies to plug leaks that arise as a result of inefficiency and corruption.

“We will make the policies under the PR government more transparent to avoid leakages and waste through corruption,” he said.

"We also will make the process in procuring government contracts more transparent and have open tenders to end the monopoly by families of ministers.

"Then we will look at the possibility of reducing subsidies," he added.

Anwar also said PR's budget would present a more "realistic" picture of Malaysia's economic situation next year, forecasting the size of the Malaysian economy at RM1,064 billion with an economic growth rate of 5.2 per cent, inflation rate of three per cent and a budget deficit ease of 3.5 per cent.

"BN has never fulfilled any of their economic forecast. They have never been honest about their figures," he said, pointing out that Putrajaya had failed to register the targeted growth of six per cent for eight consecutive quarters from Q3 2010 onwards.

"PR will be honest about the figures and in turn, present a more realistic forecast on the direction of the economy," he added.

PR's Budget proposals, which include promises to raise disposable income by cutting car taxes, abolish road tolls and waive student loans, were announced today ahead of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's official announcement on Friday of the government's plans for spending and taxes next year.

PR's proposals will put pressure on BN as the country braces for what is expected to be its most keenly contested general election in the next few months.

Najib also is expected to announce equally populist policies on Friday as he seeks to lead his Barisan Nasional (BN) to a strong mandate and will need to aggressively court voters to his side.

The PM is expected to announce more cash handouts for the poor and introduce policies to help Malaysians afford homes.

Hakcipta © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/race-based-policies-must-end-says-anwar/>