

Pakatan to embark on nationwide blitz to explain AG's report
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 16 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) lawmakers will travel nationwide to dissect and explain all discrepancies highlighted in the just-released Auditor-General's (A-G) Report, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today, in an apparent bid to shore up support ahead of the coming polls.

"We have studied the A-G's report thoroughly and we will explain it throughout the country... because the country has lost billions of ringgit... incidences that were wiped out just like that, disguised as projects meant to benefit the people.

"Even including projects like defective military quarters, even that was forgiven just like that... and many other cases," the PR de facto leader (picture) told a press conference after chairing the pact's presidential council meeting in Parliament today.

DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang added that the government's decision to delay tabling the A-G's report showed a clear and deliberate ploy by the executive to interfere in parliamentary processes.

"It infringes the sovereignty of Parliament, clearly it is interference by the executive," he said.

"Every year, we see how the A-G's report becomes more and more thick... showing that there are even more cases of misappropriation."

The A-G's report for 2011 released yesterday had revealed numerous wastages in federal expenditure despite finding that more government agencies had raised their financial performance last year compared to 2010.

Of all the government agencies evaluated, 111 agencies, or 31.4 per cent, were rated "very good" compared with 77 agencies (21.6 per cent) in 2010 and 48 agencies (12 per cent) in 2009, A-G Tan Sri Ambrin Buang had said in a statement.

Among others, the report had highlighted that the military family quarters built by the Defence Ministry had seen costs nearly double to RM3.2 billion amid a litany of defects including collapsed ceilings and leaking sewer pipes.

The report had also found that a majority of the military quarters projects that were audited were awarded by direct negotiation and that the government had waived penalties worth RM87.12 million for failure to meet contractual obligations.

The report also said that the projects to build and upgrade rural roads in Sarawak were found to be "unsatisfactory" after the audit team discovered delays, negative feedback and even roads not built according to contract specifications.

The federal audit also criticised the capital city's traffic information system, describing it as "unsatisfactory" and implemented without a cost-benefit study, with less than half of its outdoor equipment, such as television cameras and message boards, in proper working order.

It also said the Integrated Transport Information System Project (ITIS) bought 1,600 Automatic Vehicle Location System for RM11.37 million, but only 1,408 (88 per cent) were used for three years after the date of supply.

ITIS was funded by Putrajaya to develop and integrate information systems on traffic and transportation to overcome traffic congestion in the Klang Valley. It was built by a consortium for RM365.74 million over 32 months from August 1, 2002 to March 31, 2005. The audit report said another company was made the project consultant for RM7.31 million and a reimbursement cost of RM680,000.

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