

PM: Civil service to advise administration on policies, strategies instead of relying on external consultants

By Azman Abdul Hamid - March 2, 2023 @ 7:11pm

MANILA: The government has directed the civil service to take the lead in advising the administration on policies and strategies instead of relying on external consultants, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar said the Chief Secretary to the Government, Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali, had "made the matter clear" to the civil service, and that he had mentioned it repeatedly in post-Cabinet meetings, especially in the Prime Minister's Department and the Finance Ministry.

The prime minister said there should be no more dependency on third parties unless there was a lack of subject experts in the government and this can be done with the civil servants providing research recommendations and findings for decision-making.

Anwar said a new policy has been implemented, and guidelines on the matter have already been given to the public sector.

Nevertheless, he said this did not mean that the government would not seek the help of the consultants, especially in areas where the public sector lacked expertise.

"I have made that reference (on consultants) during the Budget discussions because I have faith in the ability of civil servants who have the experience, expertise, and even the academic qualifications," Anwar told the Malaysian media after meeting the Malaysian diaspora at the Malaysian ambassador's official residence in Makati here this evening.

"So if they need, for example, some form of assistance from consultants, that can be done but it must be led by our team, then we train them. When they (civil servants) have the exposure, they can train the younger ones."

The prime minister, who was attending the final event of his two-day official visit to the Philippines, was asked to elaborate on his response during a question-and-answer session, where he said that past governments have overly relied on external and foreign consultants on a host of matters.

That practice cost the administration hundreds of millions of taxpayers money. Malaysia has 1.7 million civil servants.