Wake up Malaysia, it’s time to play the ‘beyond GDP’ game! — Mohd Mahyudi Mohd Yusop

JULY 1 — The bulk of the discussions surrounding the recent announcements on the government’s economic strategies, particularly the Tenth Malaysia Plan (10MP) and the New Economic Model, have been centred on the issue of a high-income economy. To the discerning few, this situation raises a pertinent concern on whether or not a high-income is necessarily good for the wellbeing of all Malaysians in the spirit of 1 Malaysia.

Indeed, this is a valid reaction given that, as rightly pointed out by many segments of the society who have commented on those official announcements, the actual thrust for those plans is the rakyat’s or people’s quality of life. Hence, in the absence of the most complete and universally accepted measure of overall quality of life, should we then allow Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to be the unattainable link to prosperity and progress even when the “father of GDP”, Simon Kuznets, himself admitted that GDP was never meant to be a measure for welfare and wellbeing? In other words, should we continue to feel comfortable with the skewed pursuit of economic growth especially when we are more than aware that economics is merely one of the various nutrients in life?