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#### Anwar urges impromptu visits to project sites

Adeline Ong

MINISTERS and high-ranking Government officials should make impromptu visits to project sites instead of scheduled ones to spot shoddy workmanship and weaknesses, Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said yesterday. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is on leave for two months.

Speaking at the ground breaking ceremony of the RM1.2 billion Employees Provident Fund-Malaysian Building Society Bhd housing project in Sungai Besi, Kuala Lumpur yesterday, Anwar said developers were in the habit of hiding the weaknesses and defects in their projects during visits by Ministers and other authorities.

"Whenever I visit a housing project, they take me to the model house. Of course, the model house is built very well and has no defects. More often than not, it is better than the other houses.

"Now I make it a point to visit other houses as well so that I will know the actual situation. Similarly, when I go to the rural areas, they take me to designated areas which have been completely cleaned and prepared for my visit," he said.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said he was disappointed by the attitudes of certain developers who did not carry out their projects properly.

Anwar added that he had visited some rural areas and was shocked to find that infrastructure projects like roads had not been built although funds had been allocated.

"I am not happy at all about the roads in rural areas. They are bad and do not reflect a growing economy. While we move forward into the era of industrialisation and information technology, we should not ignore the rural poor. If we do this our credibility as a fair Government will be questionable," Anwar added.

He said he was puzzled as to why projects by-the-rich-for-the-rich, were immediately approved.

Anwar also said State Governments should not constantly attribute their failure to build low-cost house to the scarcity of land.

"But they then always have land to build golf courses. What kind of state Governments are these?," he questioned.

Anwar said there was nothing wrong with building golf courses but it should not be at the expense of the people, especially the poor.

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