

22 JUL 1997

Anwar-Salam

SALAM MALAYSIA ON WORLDWIDE MISSION OF GRATITUDE

KUALA LUMPUR, July 22 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today the Yayasan Salam, which will bring Malaysian volunteers to all corners of the world, is a mission of gratitude for the country's economic achievements.

The Acting Prime Minister said there was no better way of expressing this gratitude than to serve the less fortunate and help nations which are going through what Malaysia once experienced.

"This gratitude should be followed up with action and welfare work and there is no better way to express our thanks to God than doing good to people within and outside the country who are in need of guidance and assistance."

"The people who are still backward like we once were, the people who are in need of help just like the help we received before," Anwar said when launching the Yayasan Salam at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

He said the sincere and dedicated volunteer service dispensed through Yayasan Salam would rekindle the adventurous spirit of young Malaysians in the cause of universal wellbeing.

Anwar said Malaysian youths were now invited to ignite the spirit of volunteerism and the time spent on useless chatter and lamenting over their fate should have passed.

From being dragged along and finding fault, youths should now rekindle their adventurous spirit and prove that Malaysians were willing and capable of creating a new wave of adventurous life.

He said even though there had been much drumming up of the various negative stories about the younger generation it nevertheless was an established fact that hundreds of thousands of young people were involved in many voluntary activities, student and youth welfare work and social service through non-governmental organisations.

The Acting Prime Minister wanted to highlight such good service so that the young would have a new experience and such experience would be shared by society at large.

He said volunteerism was not something new for Malaysians as could be seen in their gotong royong spirit and also evident in the voluntary struggle of the past generation to achieve independence.

Anwar said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had enhanced Malaysia's image as a nation concerned over the fate of the international community and had courageously spoken up for the victimised, the oppressed and those whose cause should be taken up.

"Yayasan Salam is an avenue for us to continue with our agenda and the measures taken by the Prime Minister to serve society which is in need of help."

Malaysia had conquered Mt Everest and soon would leave for Antartica but there were still areas which Malaysians would have to venture into for service to ease the sufferings as well as the grief and sadness of the less fortunate and with God's permission, brighten their future, Anwar said.

He said Salam volunteers, who would serve in the countries of Indo-China, Latin America, Africa and also South Pacific nations such as Fiji and Papua New Guinea, "will not export anything, nor get any share or promote Malaysia's ideology but will bring Malaysia's greetings to all continents and the whole world."

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, was happy and proud over the

readiness of private companies and Malaysian industrialists to support Yayasan Salam with contributions totalling RM7.2 million.

Kumpulan Lions, Petronas, Kumpulan Abrar, YTL Group and TA Enterprise Berhad each donated RM1 million.

Meanwhile Yayasan Salam Chairman, Tan Sri Razali Ismail, said he proposed to enlist the support of the "United Nations Volunteers" (UNV), which had wide experience in voluntary activities throughout the world to help Yayasan Salam.

"In the course of my meetings with UNV representatives in New York and Geneva recently, we discussed several matters to enhance and realise the potential of Salam," he said.

Razali, who is current President of the UN General Assembly, said Salam would act as an organisation incharge of handling the voluntary works oriented towards Malaysian identity, following Malaysia's mould without ignoring the cultures and lifestyle of the local communities targetted for help.

"Salam does not aspire to impose our ways on foreign societies," he said.

Malaysia did not have a history of imperialism, he added.

Salam, is a non-profit organisation, giving service in the fields of education, health and community development, he said.

It would deploy volunteers of quality and calibre as the country's representatives overseas as Malaysia's image would have to be maintained, he said.

At the launching ceremony, Anwar who is the founder and patron of Yayasan Salam, presented the foundation's awards to five people who had contributed much as volunteers including nurse Aliyah Fong Abdullah who served in the Palestine refugee camp in Bourj el-Barajneh in 1987. --

BERNAMA

MNY AAM