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Anwar: Focus on human development programmes

Badrul Hisham Mahzan

SHAH ALAM, Fri. - Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said focus on human development programmes must continue despite the current economic problems facing the country.

The Deputy Prime Minister said these programmes were important to the country and the party.

He welcomed efforts to hold various religious programmes, including conducting mass prayers during the fasting month which greatly benefited the Muslims.

Speaking at the breaking of the fast held at the Selangor Menteri Besar's recently-refurbished official residence here, Anwar welcomed the measures adopted by the State Government to address the economic problems.

Also present were Menteri Besar Datuk Abu Hassan Omar, Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamad, Deputy Ministers, State Executive Councillors and senior State officials.

There was an uproar last December after the State Government revealed during the last sitting of the State Assembly that it spent RM5 million to refurbish the residence.

"The State Government has adhered to the guidelines spelt out by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the National Economic Action Council."

Anwar warned that the measures proposed by the Government in resolving the economic problems would not be of any benefit if the people, the party and the Government were not mobilised to carry them out.

He urged Umno leaders to go down and meet the people to explain the economic situation.

"The leaders should not take the problem lightly and they must make efforts to give adequate information on measures needed to overcome them," he said.

Citing the present economic problems as the worst to have hit the country, he said, it resulted from the contagion effect caused by the problems in Thailand and Indonesia.

While there seemed to be improvement in the economies of South Korea and Thailand, Anwar said Indonesia was still badly hit.

"On our part, we have taken measures as early as March, last year and before the baht crisis hit Thailand last July," he said, adding that the Government also carried out reforms in October and on Dec 5.

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