

Anwar heading to Turkiye tonight to extend moral support

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PARLIAMENT | Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim will leave for Turkiye tonight to provide moral support to the country which was hit by an earthquake last week.

This comes after Anwar received an invitation from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who expressed gratitude for Malaysia's prompt delivery of aid.

"I was asked by the (Turkiye) president personally (via phone calls) if I can go there immediately to give moral support and I have considered leaving tonight as several other countries have arrived as well," he told the Dewan Rakyat today.

Speaking during the Minister's Question Time (MQA) session, Anwar said the cost of the Malaysian Special Search and Rescue Team (Smart) to Turkiye so far was RM4 million.

He added that a Turkish airline bore the cost of the flight.

"We have sent two teams and tonight another one will be sent including the armed forces with hospital facilities that have already been installed and are in operation.

"Meanwhile, (by) tomorrow afternoon some local companies should have collected about RM20 million including US\$1 million (RM4.35 million) from the government and US\$1 million from the Johor sultan," he said.

Anwar was answering a question from Iskandar Dzulkarnain Abdul Khalid (Perikatan Nasional- Kuala Kangsar) who asked the prime minister to state what form of assistance the government has given to Turkiye and Syria following the earthquake.

The MP also requested the cost of the entire deployment of the Smart team throughout their assignment in the disaster area.

Aid to Syria

Anwar said Malaysia has decided to channel aid to Syria including medical equipment and humanitarian missions regardless of US sanctions policy.

"Malaysia will still send a team to help as soon as there is a response from the Syrian government, but funding and medical equipment have been decided and the defence minister (Mohamad Hasan) wants to install hospital equipment in Syria," he added.

A large earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale hit southern Turkiye and northwestern Syria last Monday and has claimed tens of thousands of lives, with tremors also felt in Cyprus and Lebanon.

Last Tuesday, Turkiye declared a three-month state of emergency in 10 provinces namely Adana, Adiyaman, Diyarbakir, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaras, Kilis, Malatya, Osmaniye and Sanliurfa to ensure the search and rescue mission runs smoothly.

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