

## **Malaysia on track towards continued progress, says PM**

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**Bernama**

Malaysia is on track towards continued progress, thanks to the political stability and peace brought about within the first year of the government's administration of the country, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said.

He said the government was a team that prioritised political stability and strove to introduce clear policies to boost Malaysians' prosperity in various aspects, including quality education, healthcare and direct aid to the people.

"It's time to focus on developing the country and to keep negative elements away as I am convinced that if we can do this in a year, we will lift Malaysia to greater heights in the region.

"Political observers, economists and investors all view it this way," Anwar said on TV3's special interview programme entitled 'A Year with the Madani Government: The Prime Minister's Endeavour' that aired last night.

The prime minister said what was important was the people's comfort and the

government was committed to helping Malaysians affected by the rising cost of goods through various measures, including the implementation of targeted subsidies and increasing the Rahmah Cash Aid.

### **Rising cost of living**

Anwar also acknowledged that the rising cost of living was a problem but the Rahmah initiatives introduced by the government were capable of helping the people, and the government intended to expand these initiatives throughout the country.

“Rising prices is a global problem...meanwhile we control it as best we can,” he said.

The prime minister said the government viewed cash aid as being better than providing subsidies wholesale, which would be enjoyed by the top 10 percent of the wealthiest Malaysians, along with almost 3.5 million foreign workers in the country.

“With targeted subsidies, we can inject more benefits, including the RM100 e-Madani incentive that we will continue,” he said.

"I guarantee that if we retract subsidies and it affects the people, we will increase

the aid,” he said.

Anwar, who is also the Pakatan Harapan chairperson, touched on national political issues, describing allegations that the coalition government was ‘non-Malay’ and against Islam as disgusting political slander.

Politics should be debated based on policies, facts and figures, he said.

“About the Malay language, we have a stronger stance than previously. For the Jana Wibawa programme, I will not allow those who sully the bumiputera name, give it to a Chinese company, but the tender complies with the regulations, whether Chinese, Indian, or Dayak, that’s another matter.

“Embezzlement, I don’t care if it’s Malay, Chinese or Indian, we will take stern action,” he said, stressing that the government protected the special rights of the Malays as enshrined in Article 153 of the Federal Constitution.

### **On Kemaman polls**

He also said he accepted the decision of voters for the recent Kemaman parliamentary by-election, pointing out that it was an opposition stronghold.

“(PAS) victory in Kemaman, I accept it. It’s the decision of the voters, and I even

congratulated the winning candidate, but that's an opposition stronghold. Where we are strong, we win by 100,000 votes, some with 70,000 votes. So, it's inconsequential," he added.

The prime minister also reiterated his uncompromising stand where corruption is concerned, stating that no leader in his administration was found to have been garnering illicit wealth.

"I'm grateful that this year there has not been any case against leaders with illicit wealth. This is an indisputable fact," he said.

The prime minister added that a Madani Monitoring Unit under the Prime Minister's Department has been set up to check on the effectiveness of initiatives announced and to ensure their implementations are not in vain.

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