

Settlers take a shine to PM

Anwar's Felda visit sets tongues wagging

ALOR SETAR: The presence of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at Felda Teloi Timur has got settlers here excited.

Senior citizen Sofia Ramli, 70, said she felt proud that Anwar came all the way from the capital to visit her village.

"This is my first time seeing him face to face. Prior to this, we only saw him on television," she said.

The self-professed PAS member said she perceives Anwar as a leader who is capable of leading the country with his calmness and aura that are like "other global leaders".

Another villager, Zahidi Yaacob, 55, also a PAS member, said although he voted for PAS in the last general election, he found Anwar a leader who could take Felda settlers to a brighter future.

"I don't think PAS will be able to do that. The current PAS leadership, especially in Kedah, only knows how to talk but not walk the talk" he said.

He said he hopes PAS could sit down and talk with unity pact leaders for the sake of Felda settlers.

Housewife Mazni Azmi, 36, said she and her family were excited when she got to know that the Prime Minister was going to visit the village.

"I think this is the first time a big personality from Putrajaya like Anwar has come to visit us," said



People's leader: Anwar waving to the crowd while attending the Everything Felda Carnival in Jeneri, Kedah.
- ZHAFARAN NASIB/The Star

the mother of two.

However, her husband missed the occasion because he had to go to Alor Setar to visit a friend.

Siti Zabaidah Arshad, 65, could not hide her feelings after seeing Anwar in person for the first time.

"I thought he was a bad person after listening to a ceramah, but he was not - he is a soft-spoken and well-mannered gentleman," she said.

Anwar visited Kedah yesterday and his first stop was at Felda Teloi Timur at the Everything Felda Carnival.

He took a helicopter ride into this Felda settlement located within the Jeneri state constituency,

where the incumbent assemblyman is caretaker Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor.

In his speech, Anwar vowed to resolve all issues related to Felda before handing over the government-linked company to other ministries.

"We will resolve all the issues involving Felda, but the government under the unity pact must remain in power until it finishes its term," he said.

Anwar, also the Finance Minister, said he will do his best to bring changes to Felda for the sake of the future, adding that he had proven his commitment to this by

approving a RM8.3bil allocation to waive Felda settlers debts in June.

He said he cannot do this alone and needs all the settlers' support to solve issues plaguing Felda, one at a time.

"We are able to get all these done with just eight months in power. Imagine what we can do in the next five years," he said.

Also present during the event were Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Deputy Human Resources Minister Mustapha @ Mohd Yunus Sakmud, Felda chairman Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek and National Felda Settlers chief Sulong Jamil Mohamed Sharif.