

SUSCEPTIBLE TO INFLUENCE

PM: IGNORANCE WILL LEAD TO PREJUDICE

Anwar tells youths to delve deeper into an issue, avoid relying on social media explainers

TANJUNG MALIM

IGNORANCE or the lack of knowledge, especially among youths, makes people susceptible to the influence of some quarters, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

With limited knowledge, individuals would accept any view and get trapped in prejudice, he said.

“(When) we don’t have much knowledge, and someone says we will go to hell if we don’t do certain things, we then ask if that is true.

“(And) because we have little knowledge, we wouldn’t dare to question it further, we find ourselves trapped in old-fashioned thinking and judge others indiscriminately,” he said in his speech at the 2023 National Books Awards at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) here yesterday.

Anwar said youths and undergraduates should improve their knowledge by instilling a

love for reading.

“Go back to this reminder, our culture, the Malay culture itself... only improves with the strength of knowledge.

“(If we) want to be successful, (and) make this country a Madani country; improve knowledge, compete with other countries. With the spirit of reading; Malaysia will be a country of excellence.”

Anwar said it was alarming that today’s generation was easily influenced by simplistic and incomplete explanation of ideas on social media.

He said certain ideas on the economy, the country’s policies and ideal must be investigated in depth, taking into consideration the *kuliyah* concept.

“The concept of *kuliyah* is knowledge that must be mastered in depth, and not just (by watching) a few minutes’ explainer on social media.”

He said the challenge for youths was to delve deeper into knowledge instead of accepting some explanations at face value.

He said people must never stop learning and reading about new knowledge, especially on new technology like artificial intelligence.

Present were Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir and National Book Development Foundation managing chairman

Professor Tan Sri Abdul Latiff Abu Bakar.

Anwar also announced an allocation of RM25 million for the construction of 18 blocks of student accommodation at UPSI.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, announced this during a Temu Anwar session with about 5,000 UPSI students at the Dewan Tuanku Canselor after launching the 2023 National Book Award.

“The existing accommodation can only take in 7,804, or 36 per cent, of the students here, this is the lowest rate compared with the 60 per cent at other institutions.

“When I heard this, immediate action had to be taken.

“To increase accommodation capacity, I approved RM25 million for this expenditure,” he said to applause from UPSI students and staff.

Anwar said the project would be implemented under the Public-Private Partnership Unit of the Prime Minister’s Department, and that he had instructed the Finance Ministry to ensure the allocation was approved before the end of the year.

Zambry, who visited UPSI’s Ungku Omar Residential College on Saturday, had said the Higher Education Ministry would hold talks with institutions of higher learning nationwide to identify those with student accommodation issues. **Bernama**