

# 'We must feel pain of others'

## No religion in the world teaches us to have contempt for others, says Anwar

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**TANJUNG MALIM:** In a world faced with increasing strife, the Prime Minister has appealed to Malaysians not to ignite racial problems.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said it had come to a stage when people no longer sympathised when babies and children were killed, referring to the genocide in Gaza.

"When women and children were murdered in Ukraine (by Russia) it was called a genocide but when Palestinian children and Women are killed, it is deemed as a defence by Israel," he added.

Referring to the goings-on in the country, Anwar said people must consider the feelings of fellow Malaysians.

"People must feel it when a child is abused or hurt, never mind if the child is a Malay, Chinese, Indian, Kadazan or Dayak. We must feel something.

"What is the point of discussing religion and race if we do not have humanitarian values and principles," he said in his speech at the National Book Awards 2023 at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) here yesterday.

The Prime Minister said a good Muslim should adopt good values and attitude, adding that there was no need to incite hate or call others kafir (infidels).



**In the spotlight:** Anwar greeting students at the National Book Awards 2023 at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. — Bernama

"No religion in the world teaches us to have contempt of each other," he remarked.

Anwar also urged Malaysians to learn Mandarin and English once they were proficient in the Malay language.

Speaking to an audience of more than 5,000 UPSI students, Anwar said a person must try to reach for the stars but needed to

first "strengthen their roots".

"What I have to emphasise here is that Malaysians need to first master the Malay language.

"(But) it is also important for us to increase our proficiency in English, specifically among university students so they can compete at international level.

"If youths want to master the Chinese language, it is better since

it is no longer an ethnic language but is now an important language in economy and trade especially in Asia," he added.

Anwar said no developed country stressed on learning only a single language.

"Even in Islam, Prophet Muhammad instructed that the Quran be translated into the Persian language," he said.

In order to play catch up with the evolving education sector, Anwar said it was pertinent that locals master the Malay language.

He said the measures included instructing local companies to write in Bahasa Melayu to government agencies for official correspondence.

"This is why I will not compromise on mastering Bahasa Melayu. The country has gained independence but there are still proficiency issues surrounding the national language.

"Companies can rake up profits but they won't spend a dime to hire a teacher to teach their executives and staff to speak proper Bahasa Melayu.

"Once we have mastered the language in which we have solidified our 'roots', the question of reaching up high for our ambitions would no longer be an issue, as such learning another language," he added.

He also had some advice for the students.

"This campus needs to be the example of tolerance, of great thinkers. UPSI must rise up and become the best example in its great history," he added.