

Paradigm shift for M'sia

Anwar pledges the people's welfare will be paramount

By **ZAKIAH KOYA**
zakiah@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: The people's welfare would be the top priority for the government to make sure all Malaysians are treated equally and justly regardless of race or religion, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In his New Year's Day message to usher in 2023, the Prime Minister called for a better understanding of the concept of a "paradigm shift" so that policies are made with the people in mind.

"The paradigm shift must not only be in the mindset of those who govern but also in the policies of development on the ground," he said in his speech at the Putrajaya mosque after a special prayer to usher in the new year.

Earlier, Anwar joined Cabinet members and the public at the mosque to pray for the well-being of Malaysia.

The Prime Minister also warned that he would not give in to those who have embezzled funds while holding high positions and that the money would be returned to the people.

"The paradigm shift may be nice to hear but it must also be translated into good practice.

"Should we allow the development of mega projects but ignore



New chapter: Anwar delivering his New Year's Day message at Masjid Putra in Putrajaya. — Bernama

the welfare of the people?

"We want to develop the country, but not at the expense of our humanity. Big companies are making huge profits but the pay for their workers is still very low," he added.

Anwar said when he met Kuala Lumpur City Hall officers recently, he pointed out to them that the city's stalls were still like those in the 1960s.

"The paradigm shift must take into account the welfare of the people," he said while reminding those with authority not to continue with

their negligent attitude.

"I will not tolerate this. I hope they will repent," he said without elaborating further.

The Prime Minister also called out those whom he claimed had pocketed wealth while in office, saying that although such practices were in the past, he was not going to let them walk free.

"We have laws in this country. We will monitor government-linked companies and their expenditure.

"Those who have taken billions of ringgit, the money will be returned to the people.

"Personally, if the matters affect only me, I can forgive - but if it affects the people, then I will not forgive.

"There are still some ordinary folk who earn RM40 a day, but those who looted took RM4mil (a day)," he added.

Anwar urged everyone to come together and stop politicking post-GE15 as the country would be facing health and economic issues.

"The focus is to increase efforts to instil confidence among foreign direct investors, to have better governance and a country free of corruption and abuse of power.

"Malaysia is a trading country. Our economic growth is due to domestic and foreign trade.

"With better governance, we can give a guarantee that Malaysia is not a country where political leaders enrich themselves, but instead use the money to drive growth for the people," he added.

He also urged Malaysians to do away with narrow-mindedness when it comes to understanding religions and to live together in harmony regardless of race, religion or culture.