

10-YEAR PLAN

RM10 billion in sukuk to spur Felda's recovery

KUALA LUMPUR: The government will channel RM10 billion in sukuk for Felda's recovery plans for 10 years.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the allocation had been approved last month by the Finance Ministry to ensure the federal agency's survival.

"We previously had the sukuk, but it was suspended by the previous government. However, I have signed the approval (for the allocation) last month.

"This is to ensure Felda's survival and recovery in the industry as a huge institution (that can help its settlers)," he said during the national-level Felda Settlers' Day celebration at the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang near here yesterday.

Last week, the government announced that it would restructure Felda's debts through sukuk issuance and revolving credit.

Anwar, who is also the finance minister, said a large part of the restructuring plans involved reducing Felda's debts.

He also said the restructuring would help reduce Felda's costs against rising interest rates and allow it to abolish 80 per cent of settlers' loans worth RM8.3 billion.

Following this, Anwar pledged that the government would restructure Felda's financial position to ensure that it could abolish 80 per cent of its settlers' debts.

"As what was announced last week, the government has also agreed to restructure Felda's financial position through sukuk issuance and revolving credit in our effort to recover its finances and allow the abolishment of 80 per cent of settlers' loans worth RM8.3 billion."

The prime minister also said Putrajaya had pledged to prioritise Felda's recovery in the 2024 Budget, which would be tabled in October.

Anwar said the move to prioritise the institution was to look after the people of Felda and their livelihood.



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaking to attendees at the national-level Felda Settlers' Day celebration at the Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang yesterday. PIC BY ASWADI ALIAS

"I vow to review (the move to help the settlers) through the 12th Malaysia Plan. And through this, we will include Felda under the second Madani Budget in October in efforts to lift the people's livelihood."

Anwar also announced that the government would provide special health incentives worth RM21.2 million for settlers aged 65 years and above.

"To ensure their health is taken care of, individuals aged 65 and above will be given RM300 each and this incentive will benefit a total of 70,715 settlers.

"The government will also establish a dialysis centre with an allocation of RM21 million for all Felda districts. The centre is expected to benefit almost 2,000 patients from Felda who have to travel up to two hours to get treatment."

Anwar also announced that the government had agreed to bear the operating costs of 37,012 streetlights in Felda districts nationwide, which amounted to RM7.7 million, as well as diesel subsidies worth RM36 million to ensure smooth operations and alleviate the energy and water ra-

tions in Sabah.

Anwar also vowed to resolve abandoned housing projects faced by second-generation Felda farmers.

"Give me some time to discuss with the (plantation industries and commodities) minister, as we need to check the cost. However, I have agreed to consider (to resolve the issue)."

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari and Felda chairman Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek.