

# Making Tamil accessible



**Reaching out:** Anwar mingling with the crowd during the 11th International Tamil Research Conference held at Universiti Malaya. — SHAARI CHEMAT/The Star

## PM: The language should be taught at all secondary schools

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tamil could be introduced as an additional elective subject in all secondary schools nationwide, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

According to the Prime Minister, he would suggest this to Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek as it is in line with the constitutional rights of all citizens.

“It has been our national education policy that the Malay language is the main medium of instruction. However, we must (also) promote the use of English.

“At the same time, we must also allow and encourage students, in this case Tamil students, to continue to master Tamil in secondary schools,” he said in his keynote address at the International Tamil Research Conference in Universiti Malaya here yesterday.

However, the Prime Minister said the suggestion would also face some obstacles, mainly the availability of Tamil educators.

“When there are few students, it’s difficult to employ teachers. However, I will alert Fadhlina and make necessary adjustments,” Anwar said.

“There may be fewer than 15 students wanting to learn the subject, sometimes even 10 or 9, but let them learn (it) so that they can

master an additional language.”

The Prime Minister also announced an allocation of RM1mil for the International Tamil Research Conference.

“In this age, mastery of languages is important.

“The old mindset of some Malaysians would be against efforts to promote other languages in secondary schools. They tend to ignore the fact that this mastery is important,” he said.