

Funds allocated for Socso, healthcare and education

KUALA LUMPUR: The government has allocated RM100mil this year as provision for an 80% grant to Socso contributions for gig workers, besides gradually expanding the coverage of the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and Socso to the working population in phases, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said this is crucial because according to data from EPF, more than 40% of the workforce does not have proper retirement savings, especially among informal workers, and as such, improvements will be made to ensure that the level of retirement savings is sufficient for Malaysians.

“The government will continue to strengthen the employment insurance system and retraining programmes to provide job opportunities for the unemployed. This approach is aligned with the transition from protecting jobs to protecting the workers in the context of a rapidly changing economy,” said Anwar at the launch of the Madani Economy: Empowering the Rakyat initiative

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Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

here yesterday.

He said the people’s access to quality healthcare and education is his administration’s top priority and allocations will be increased in accordance with the government’s financial capacity.

In line with this, the government aims to move Malaysia into among the top 25 on the UN

Human Development Index, which takes into account health and education achievements, Anwar said, adding that he is committed to achieving a target of 5% of gross domestic product (GDP) for healthcare expenditure by optimising the public and private healthcare systems.

“The provision of quality healthcare access is manifested through the construction of the National Disease Control Centre with a projected cost of RM305mil ip Negri Sembilan, It serves not only as a disease reference centre but also as a facility to prepare the country for any potential pandemic in the future,” Anwar said.

Besides retirement and healthcare, he said efforts have also been made in education, particularly in increasing allocations, streamlining procurement procedures and decentralising implementation authority to accelerate school projects and improve dilapidated schools.

He said that to better meet the needs of development, Malaysia’s education system needs to be

more demand-driven, especially in strengthening cooperation with industries and employers, particularly in the implementation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

“We need to provide lifelong learning pathways in whatever skills the rakyat wants to learn, whether it’s in universities, TVET institutions or through necessary micro-credentials,” said Anwar.

He said that the government, through Socso, has set aside RM42mil for the Bina Kerjaya Programme, which includes upskilling programmes for informal workers, including gig workers with qualifications of Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and below.

Separately, Anwar also pointed out that as of 2022, 97% of Malaysia’s population has access to treated water supply, with the exception of some residents in Kelantan and Sabah.

He said his administration is addressing this issue and has allocated an additional RM800mil for short-term solutions in both states.