

PM: Do more to plug subsidy leakages

KOTA BARU: Enforcement agencies need to do more to plug leakages especially when it comes to subsidised goods, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"This country is prosperous but there are far too many leaks. Subsidies meant for the poor have been stolen. Cooking oil, diesel subsidies have been siphoned off, so when will these subsidies ever be enough?"

"That's why enforcement agencies, including in Kelantan, should pay more attention to plugging leakages in the system," he said in his special address to Kelantan civil servants at Balai Islam Lundang here yesterday, reported Bernama.

Also present were Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Ahmad Yakob, Public Service Department director-general Datuk Dr Zulkapli Mohamed, Prime Minister's Department



Concern for the people: Anwar (centre) looking at plans for the At-Taqwa Mosque in Mukim Alor Pasir, Kelantan. - Bernama

Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) director-general Datuk Seri Wan Ahmad Dahlan Abdul Aziz, and Kelantan state secretary Datuk Nazran Muhammad.

In citing electricity as an exam-

ple, Anwar said the energy subsidy was being enjoyed across the board even by high-income households.

"How much is the subsidy for electricity? If left uncontrolled

this year, it could reach RM30bil. If this is how much we spend on the electricity subsidy, how can we afford to build new schools and universities?"

Anwar said he was against abolishing the subsidy and increasing the rate for consumers as this would burden them.

"So what choice do we have? We increased the rate for the high-income earners only, while the rest of the people are not affected," he said.

As such, Anwar urged civil servants to help explain policies regarding taxes and subsidies to the public.

"At times, it is difficult to understand these policies because they are not fully explained and civil servants as the voice of the government that sees to policy implementation, they should know that I do not intend to raise taxes that affect low-income people, this is clear," he said.