

# Give interns reasonable allowance'

## PM: Companies should look after trainees' welfare

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Companies have been urged to consider giving interns attending their industrial training programmes a reasonable allowance to cover their daily expenses.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said while the government did not establish clear terms and regulations on the payment for interns, companies must also look into the welfare of trainees and new graduates.

"It would be reasonable to provide an allowance to cover their daily expenses like transportation fares and meals.

"We understand that internship is not a regular job but just an opportunity for early exposure to work" he said during the launch of the Capital Market Graduate Programme (CMGP) new name, InvestEd, at the Securities Com-

mission headquarters yesterday.

Anwar, who is also the Finance Minister, said that he raised the issue after speaking with students and recent graduates.

Citing an example, Anwar said: "When I was the Opposition Leader in Parliament previously, I hired interns for the office with the additional RM1,800 allowance given by the then government.

"I had to seek funds to pay at least RM1,000 to the interns then.

"Aside from that, they were given exposure to meet directly with ministers, MPs, and to understand the Federal Constitution, laws, as well as attend briefings by respective ministries.

"So, on behalf of youths and the graduates, I am sharing their grouses, so that consideration can be given for some allowances.

"I hope this will be accepted by all of you," he said to cheers from the floor.

When contacted, Prof Geoffrey Williams of Malaysia University



Smile for the camera: Students attending the InvestED launch by Anwar at the Malaysia Securities Commission, Kuala Lumpur. - FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

of Science and Technology said that encouraging firms to pay interns was a good move to help address financial issues faced by young people.

For instance, he said that young lawyers, as well as graduate trainees in other professional jobs, often did not get paid.

The public can use the new guidelines from the EPF Belanjawanku data to see the minimum living wage they should get, he added.

At the launch of InvestED, Anwar said that a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce, especially in the capital market, was essential for a sustainable economy.

"We need local expertise who are able to understand the com-

plexities of the market, anticipate trends and changes, and provide innovative solutions to every market obstacle including Islamic finance.

"By providing opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in the capital market industry to young graduates, this programme seeks to build a solid foundation for Malaysia's future economic growth," he added.

Anwar also said that the InvestED was in line with Malaysia's aspirations as it would serve as a unique initiative that brings together the government and private sector to create a platform for both graduates and employers.

"I understand that 9,000 students will benefit from exposure to job opportunities in the capital

market industry with 600 people guaranteed to get a job within three years," he said.

Anwar said he was also confident that this could be further improved through the participation of more industry players who collaborate with universities.

"At the same time, I hope that programmes like this could help students from poor families so that they are not left behind to reap the benefits of better job opportunities," he said, adding that this was in line with the Malaysia Madani concept as well.