



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaking at the Home Ministry's Hari Raya Madani celebration in Serdang yesterday. With him is Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail. BERNAMA PIC

'STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE'

ANWAR CALLS FOR END TO 'SAKAU'

PM asks civil service, enforcement agencies to raise their performance for the people

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday called for an end to *sakau* (stealing), and urged government agencies to do more to eliminate such practices within their ranks.

He named three agencies, the Immigration Department, Prisons Department and police, and instructed them to raise their performance.

Anwar called on enforcement bodies to strive for excellence in governance, fighting corruption and serving the people.

Civil servants, he said, must want to make changes for the good of the country.

He said it was impossible that there be no shifts or fresh approaches to curb leakages with a new prime minister and government.

"We cannot keep the practice of *sakau* ... the prime minister becomes rich and the finance minister is richer.

"I need to fight this and I ask for everyone to cooperate. The misappropriation of RM10 billion in diesel subsidies a year could have gone to building universities, re-

pairing the quarters of the police, military and prisons staff.

"This is why I want enforcement bodies to discharge their duties well. When I reprimand them, it does not mean they are not doing well.

"Our country is peaceful and institutions are running well compared with other countries.

"But for sure, as humans, there must be a desire to strive for excellence. Humans must have the intention and to always find ways to better themselves.

"We get good reports but it is impossible that God made humans who are unable to improve themselves. I want enforcement bodies to do better — the Immigration Department, Prisons Department, police to raise their performance. That is all I ask," he said at the Home Ministry's Hari Raya Madani celebration here yesterday.

The prime minister, on Saturday, had instructed the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and police to track down those responsible for the country's monetary losses due to corruption and leakages.

Commenting on an EMIR Research report that claimed Malaysia had lost RM4.5 trillion over 26 years, Anwar said he had also instructed Bank Negara Malaysia and the Inland Revenue Board to probe into the matter.

Last week, Anwar made a similar statement about leakages in the government's efforts to eradicate hardcore poverty.

He said he was convinced that leakages was why government efforts to fight poverty yielded lacklustre results despite spending RM22 billion over the years.

He had said he had asked the Employees Provident Fund research division, Khazanah Nasional Bhd and Bank Negara Malaysia to study the issue and identify what had gone wrong.

At another event yesterday, the prime minister said Tan Sri Azam Baki was retained as MACC chief commissioner because he had performed his duties fairly.

"Though some issues were raised, in terms of work, I give freedom and authority to the MACC and the attorney-general to discharge their duties.

"As far as I can see, they had carried out their duties satisfactorily. He (Azam) has taken action without favouring any group or party," Anwar said after chairing the National Economic Action Council meeting.

Anwar said Azam had carried out his duties well and without fear of favour, that even ministers' offices were raided to facilitate investigations.

"There has never been such a thing in history, searching ministers' offices based on what officials did. Subsequently, action was taken while investigations were carried out.

"For that, we continued his service."

Azam was reappointed MACC chief commissioner for one year, effective May 12.

He replaced Latheefa Koya in the role on March 9, 2020, when Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was prime minister.

Before that, he was MACC deputy chief commissioner (operations) for four years from 2016. He was also director of intelligence and director of the investigations division.