

# Anwar proves mettle as PM amid challenges

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, along with his unity government, is seen to be making significant progress in facing the various challenges in the country and globally to bring Malaysia back on track to become a developed country.

Among the first steps taken by Anwar after he was sworn in as prime minister on Nov 24 last year was announcing that he would not take his salary as prime minister and that his Cabinet members had agreed to a salary cut of 20% every month until the economy recovers.

The 76-year-old premier is firm with his stance, which prioritises the people's interest in line with the government's goal to eradicate hardcore poverty.

He is seen as taking some non-populist measures, such as not allowing another round of EPF withdrawals and ending the subsidies and control of chicken price. However, he continues to give various cash and direct assistance to the people as a result of subsidy savings, Bernama reported

Anwar and the unity government did not let the people down when faced with cost of living

> Steps taken to fight corruption, bring relief to underprivileged through various incentives via 'Payung Rahmah'

challenges during the post-Covid-19 period

Through the *Payung Rahmah* initiative, various types of assistance were given to help the low-income group and hardcore poor.

These initiatives included Rahmah Sales, Rahmah Baskets, Rahmah Menu, Rahmah Broadband Packages, Rahmah Menu Special Discount Card and Rahmah Basic Donations.

The government is spending almost RM8 billion for the 2023 Rahmah Cash Donations that would benefit 8.7 million recipients, almost 60% of the country's adult population.

The implementation of the People's Income Initiative, which aims to increase the income of the hardcore poor and the B40 group, has benefited 4,100 households so far.

Anwar, in his speech, would

often say "Malay children are my children. Chinese children are my children. Indian children are my children. Iban children or Kadazan children, they are all my children", illustrating his determination to help people regardless of their race.

Inheriting a national debt of up to RM1.5 trillion when he took over the country's leadership, he faced various twists but had produced excellent achievements within a year of his service.

"The prime minister had to face huge challenges during the first year of his appointment as prime minister due to various developments in the country and globally.

"Anwar, who is Parti Keadilan Rakyat president, is against corruption and the first thing he did when he became the PM was to reform the administrative system and eliminate corruption, 'terrifying' many people, in the

process," said political analyst Dr G. Manimaran.

Anwar also tabled the mid-term review of the 12th Malaysia Plan, covering new policies and methods to face the challenges that are realigned with the aspirations and vision of the *Madani* economy.

Universiti Teknologi Mara Kedah branch administrative science and policy studies lecturer Firdaus Ramli said Anwar's emphasis on administrative matters needs to be praised because the success and excellence of the country is influenced by good governance.

"Looking at the policies and programmes introduced by Anwar, there are several positive effects that can be identified.

"The preliminary estimate of gross domestic product for the third quarter of 2023 by the Economy Ministry shows that the national economy is expected to grow moderately at a rate of 3.3% and reach a rate of 4% this year. This shows that there has been positive growth in the economy since November 2022 despite the weak global economic environment, which is overshadowed by various international conflicts," said Firdaus.