

**Spirit of solidarity:** Anwar (front row centre) posing with some of the contributors at the Ihsan Madani fundraising event at Seri Perdana in Putrajaya. Also present are Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar (second from left) and Director-General of Public Service Tan Sri Wan Ahmad Dahlan Abdul Aziz (second from right). - Bernama



# Love in the time of disaster

PM: Highlight our care and unity with positive response stories

**PUTRAJAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has urged the sharing of more inspiring tales about how Malaysia's multiracial communities come together to help those in need, like flood victims.

Speaking at the Ihsan Madani fundraising event here yesterday, he said such stories reflect the beauty of Malaysia and should be continually highlighted "because that will ensure not only stability but also the future of this great country".

"For example, recently in Kelantan, a friend told me about a modest Chinese businessman from Bukit Mertajam - not affiliated with any association - who gathered 10 large trucks of food supplies and sent them over. This is a positive story about Malaysia.

"All races and religions embrace this approach. When there is a problem, people come forward. These are the stories we should amplify instead of focusing on racial or religious conflicts and disagreements. These are truly uplifting stories," he said in a Bernama report.

Anwar noted that not all coun-

tries could respond to disasters as swiftly as Malaysia does, especially in terms of early preparedness and the spirit of solidarity among diverse communities in assisting those in need.

"Our disaster management machinery, chaired by (Deputy Prime Minister) Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, has been in place for two to three months now. In the event of a disaster, the Civil Defence Force, the Fire and Rescue Department, and others are coordinated.

"While it's not perfect, it is, at the very least, a testament to a concerted effort, including the dedication of our civil servants, civil society volunteers and the business community. Though not everyone contributes, the majority of reports I've seen are very encouraging," he said.

Anwar expressed his gratitude for the swift and spontaneous response from the private sector to his call for assistance, whether through monetary contributions or deploying resources to affected areas.

"I am touched that, in such a short time, many have contacted my office, stating their

willingness to help.

"We haven't even fully publicised this initiative or contacted all associations and business chambers, but the willingness to contribute is evident.

"That's why I wanted to personally attend the Ihsan Madani Fundraising Event - to send a message to the people that this is a team effort, a collective commitment from all communities and groups," he added.

At the event, Anwar received RM35.8mil in contributions from 23 private companies and corporations to aid flood victims nationwide.

He also rapped the opposition for sensationalising the scheduling of the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination, which will proceed as scheduled amid the northeast monsoon floods.

Anwar said that there should not have been such a controversy because all students participating in the examination had their welfare well-cared for and had access to separate accommodations to aid in their exam preparation.

"It's the decision of the Education Ministry to proceed with the exams, but the opposition wants to

exploit this issue. As you know, we have faced this issue for decades, and we have not postponed exams," he said, adding that many students who stayed in these hostels had performed better in their examinations.

"I'm not suggesting that floods should happen every year. I'm just saying that these ideas are not bad, but of course, the opposition has been attacking (creating controversy out of this issue), I have to remind them that this is an oral exam," he added.

He said that during his visit to Terengganu recently, he was informed that the authorities had compiled a comprehensive list of all affected homes and had reached out to ensure SPM candidates would be able to sit for the examination.

"I was given the assurance that 99.9% of this year's SPM candidates will be able to sit for the exam," he said.