

ZOO NEGARA GETS EXTRA RM5 MILLION

Anwar suggests zoo management create a Madani Corner

ADIB POVERA
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

THE federal government yesterday approved a RM5 million allocation for the development of Zoo Negara.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who is also finance minister, said the allocation was to supplement the RM5 million raised by Zoo Negara through corporate social responsibility initiatives involving corporations.

"This RM10 million in allocation will be jointly managed with the Selangor menteri besar and federal government, as well as with the cooperation of the zoo committee."

Anwar said this at the launch of Zoo Negara's diamond jubilee in Hulu Kelang, near here.

Present were Deputy Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Minister Datuk Seri Huang Tiong Sii, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari and Zoo Negara deputy president Datuk Rosly@

Rahmat Ahmat Lana.

Also present were Chinese ambassador Ouyang Yujing and the prime minister's wife, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

Anwar said the zoo should create a Madani Corner on the premises.

He acknowledged the role played by Zoo Negara not only to protect wildlife but also to create a community, which he described as "ummah yang seimbang" (a balanced community).

"A balanced *ummah* is a community that can maintain equilibrium between man and nature. The Madani government upholds the concept of humanity and compassion.

"What is the meaning of life if there is no love and care, empathy and compassion among one and another?"

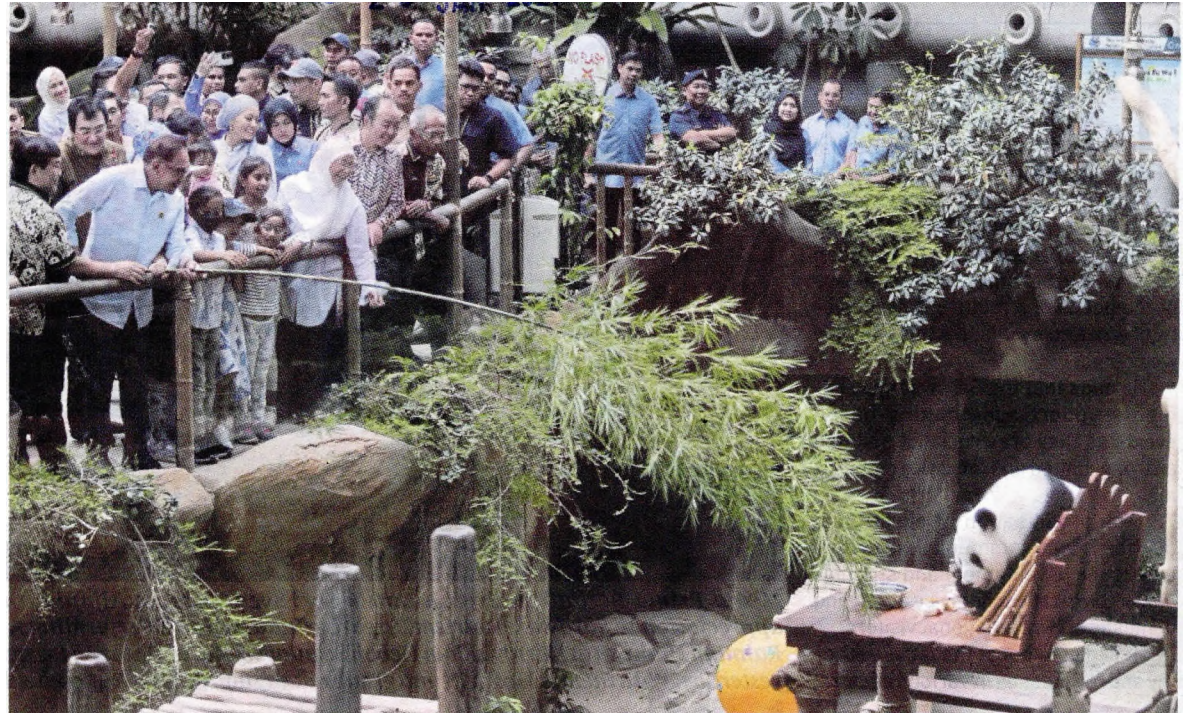
"This balance is not only between a person and another, but also extends to animals and the environment.

"Zoo Negara can provide the true meaning of the importance of creating a balanced life between mankind, animals and wildlife."

Meanwhile, he said Malaysia would ask China to extend the stay of giant pandas Xing Xing and Liang Liang at Zoo Negara.

"The giant pandas are due to be returned soon.

"But I'll take it up with the Chi-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim feeding a giant panda at Zoo Negara in Hulu Kelang, Gombak, at the launch of the zoo's diamond jubilee yesterday. With him are his wife, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Chinese ambassador Ouyang Yujing and senior officials, as well as visitors. PIC BY FATHIL ASRI

nese government, especially President Xi Jinping, to see if we can extend the pandas' stay.

"Knowing the excellent ties between the two countries, I am optimistic that they (China) will give due consideration and support to our proposal," he said when responding to criticism

about the high cost of maintaining the pandas.

He said many Malaysians visited Zoo Negara to see the giant pandas.

Xing Xing and Liang Liang were lent to Malaysia in 2014 for 10 years to mark the 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties between

Malaysia and China.

The pandas have three offspring — Nuan Nuan, born in 2015; Yi Yi, born in 2018; and Sheng Yi, born in 2021.

Nuan Nuan was sent back to China in 2017.

In August, Yi Yi and Sheng Yi were returned to China.