

'Madani govt has never sidelined Indian community'

PUTRAJAYA: The Madani government has never sidelined the Indian community in the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said various initiatives have, in fact, been implemented to empower the community.

"Our approach is to assist the Bumiputera, but this does not mean it's a zero-sum game. Helping the Malays doesn't mean we sideline other groups.

"That's why I always stress to the Indian community not to be angry or jealous about Bumiputera programmes.

"Ask what needs to be done, citizenship for those who are eligible? Those who have been left behind? Those born in Malaysia 50 or 60 years ago but didn't get citizenship?

"We have resolved all that, and this is the first time we see so much has been resolved by the Home Ministry."

Anwar said this in the *Soal Jawab Perdana Menteri* programme with four local television channels on Wednesday.

He said among the special assistance given to the Indian

> Various initiatives have been implemented to empower group, says premier

community was an allocation of RM100 million for the implementation of socio-economic development programmes through the Malaysian Indian Transformation unit (Mitra), and another RM30 million channelled under the National Entrepreneurial Group Economic Fund in the 2024 Budget.

The allocation through Mitra is for educational programmes, skills training, financial assistance to cover tuition fees for university students from B40 Indian families and career development programmes for Indian entrepreneurs, including in the agriculture, micro and gig economy sectors.

It also includes social and welfare programmes, as well as cultural, language, spiritual development and recreational activities for the B40 Indian community.

The RM30 million allocation

under the National Entrepreneurial Group Economic Fund, on the other hand, is for the Indian Community Entrepreneur Development Scheme to provide quick and easy micro-financing facilities to Indian entrepreneurs.

The fund recently announced an additional allocation of RM30 million, and over 2,000 Indian entrepreneurs wishing to expand their businesses will benefit from it.

Anwar said other initiatives include a special RM50 million fund through *Amanah Ikhtiar* Malaysia to empower Indian women entrepreneurs as well as Petronas scholarships for Indian students and employment by the government-linked company for nearly 1,000 Indian staff, although this is not widely publicised.

He dismissed claims that the government does not help the Indian community, saying that those who make such claims are the rich who are disappointed with

their own party and try to influence the Indians to hate the government.

"Don't say that they have received nothing. If compared with previous years, this is the most we have given to the Bumiputera.

"This is also the most we have given to the Indian community and also to Sabah and Sarawak in line with the Malaysia Agreement 1963, and even to the Chinese community through SMEs amounting to tens of billions of ringgit."

Anwar said the government, through the Education Ministry, also allocates funds for the maintenance of all types of national schools, including Tamil and Chinese schools, Bernama reported.

"Don't listen to one or two people making issues out of the (government giants) RM50 million for Chinese schools when the previous Perikatan Nasional and the Barisan Nasional governments also did the same.

"There is no problem when governments give billions of ringgit to national schools. This is what I meant by subsidy inciting a hateful attitude."