

PM: G20 must fight hunger, poverty

RIO DE JANEIRO: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday called on G20 countries to reassess their global priorities and direct resources towards combating hunger and poverty, rather than perpetuating conflicts and inequality.

He said economic inequality had deprived essential resources from countries in the Global South. Weak governance and a lack of politics would continue trapping communities in poverty and hunger.

"In order to break this vicious cycle, the root causes contributing to this situation must be addressed.

"Poor governance among nations is one of the main factors.

"This is often linked to corruption, which drains national and marginalises the poor and vulnerable."

Anwar said misguided policies in wealthy countries also acted as barriers in the fight against hunger.

He said a significant portion of their spending was allocated to

financing weapons and conflicts, while a small fraction of that funding could have a massive impact on combating poverty.

For instance, he said, during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, the special drawing rights allocation of US\$650 billion was intended to assist all countries.

However, Anwar said, nearly two-thirds of the allocation was enjoyed by developed nations, leaving a small amount for poorer countries in greater need.

"Such misallocation of resources must stop if we are serious about effectively eradicating hunger and poverty," Anwar said in the first intervention session titled "Fighting Hunger and Poverty" at the G20 Summit here.

Anwar called for reform of the international financial system inherited from the Bretton Woods institution.

He described the system as fundamentally benefiting the rich and powerful, while marginalising the poor and disadvantaged.

Meanwhile, Bernama reported

that Anwar said the veto power held by the P5 (Permanent Five) countries in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) should be more inclusive.

"The current setting is grossly unfair. There need to be representatives from Latin America and Africa," he said, adding that reforms of the UN had been in discussion for more than five decades.

"We are talking about reform of the institution of the United Nations. We're talking about ideals, humanity, (and) humanitarian values. We're talking about representatives. There's no representation from Africa, no representation for Latin America. Who cares?"

"Hence, they must consider adequate democratic representation from (the) regions (of) Latin America and Africa.

"It's grossly unfair to continue with the UNSC by excluding them," he said at the second "Reform of the Institutions of Global Governance" session at the G20 Summit here.