

Past merits don't matter if you're corrupt, says Anwar

TANJONG MALIM: The people should continue to support the government's fight against corruption and abuse of power, says the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said his administration remained resolute and will not tolerate individuals who syphon off billions of ringgit in revenue, be it in the past or present.

He said his firm stance against corruption and abuse of power was still being described by some quarters as a political tool used against opponents.

"How unfortunate. Yes, they have contributed to the country but everyone contributes, from the village head and penghulu to the imam. Does that give them the right to steal? Can an imam steal from the mosque because of his contributions?" he said during his lecture on "Za'ba Seabad Pemikir Kemiskinan" and the National Academic Day at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) yesterday, Bernama reported.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, challenged former leaders who amassed wealth by stealing from the nation's coffers to return the money to the people and country. He said those involved should not merely talk about their supposed efforts to defend the nation when, in reality, they did not follow through.

"Better, as a true fighter, hand over the money you stole to the people and the country," said Anwar.

He also distributed funds approved for the Madani Community Prosperity Programme (SejaTi Madani) to five recipients, as well as benefits from the People's Welfare Insurance Scheme (SIKR) to four more.