

Broadening teaching of Tamil and Chinese

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SUNGAI SIPUT: More opportunities will be provided at teacher training institutions to nurture teachers in Tamil and Chinese in addition to the national language, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said the move is aimed at training teachers in these languages so that they can be sent to serve at various schools that require such language skills.

“The purpose is to ensure more teachers are adequately trained to meet the demand in schools, that cater to students who want to master their mother tongues, without contradicting the national language policy.

“This policy is in line with the national education framework, that provides for the teaching of these languages in schools if there is sufficient demand,” Anwar said in his speech before officiating the newly opened SJKT Heawood here yesterday.

Anwar said the initiative reflects the government’s commitment to preserving linguistic diversity while ensuring that the national language remains a priority.

He noted that while the country’s education system encourages the establishment of national schools, Chinese and Tamil schools are also enshrined in it.

“Each community, every district, every village I visit, every state I go to, indeed, the list of demands increases. I have no issue with requests as long as they are raised properly.

“We live harmoniously, peacefully, negotiate well and make demands properly, and should not be swayed by negative opinions,” he added.

Anwar emphasised the importance of moderation in addressing differences between various communities to maintain the nation’s harmony.

“If there are associations, be it Indian, Hindu or any community, they should present their views properly. Don’t be swayed by the



Hear us out:
Anwar listening to a student presentation at SJKT Heawood in Sungai Siput, Perak.
- RONNIE CHIN/The Star

sentiments of extreme individuals.

“There are Malays, Chinese and Indians who are extreme now, and if we allow these people to rise, our country will be destroyed.

“That’s why we must take the middle path and negotiate properly,” he said.

However, Anwar also called on teachers in vernacular schools not to think of the mastery of Bahasa Malaysia as being unimportant.

“We want everyone to communicate well with each other. Before independence, our fathers and mothers agreed to use the national language.

“At the same time, we also agreed to improve the quality of mastering other languages, such as Tamil and Chinese,” he added.

Anwar said the Madani government will continue to assist the hardcore poor irrespective of race or religion, although there are certain parties belittling this effort.

His duty as the Prime Minister, he said, is to look after the interests and welfare of all Malaysians.

“When I say that the children of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Sabahans and Sarawakians are my children, some people attack me for that.

“They say ‘look at Anwar, he equates Malays, Chinese and Indians with the children of Malays’. But I don’t care. Because this country must be peaceful, a country for every citizen of this nation.”