

'Indian community faring better under Anwar'

> PM has shown sincere commitment in addressing minority group's long-standing issues, says ex-minister

KUALA LUMPUR: Under the government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, every sector is witnessing growth, said former water, land and natural resources minister and Selangor state assemblyman Datuk Dr Xavier Jayakumar.

He said the government's sincere commitment includes addressing long-standing issues faced by the Indian community,

Xavier said although some in the country may not acknowledge this for political reasons, the government's efforts to bring about change are evident, and its victory at the Mahkota by-election in Johor stands as proof that the people recognise the good it is doing.

"Everyone is aware the problems that the Indian community faces did not arise overnight, nor will they be resolved immediately. However, we must acknowledge that the government has already begun taking steps to alleviate these issues, and it must be recognised that the prime minister is working sincerely and honestly to address them.

"As evidence, Anwar recently held his third

meeting with the Indian representatives in Parliament, state assemblies and the Senate, outlining what the government has already done and what it plans to do for the Indian community," he said on Sunday.

He added that within just a year and a half of taking office as prime minister, Anwar has had three meetings with Indian representatives where many issues faced by the Indian community were raised.

He said it also reflects the premier's genuine concern for and the importance he places on the community.

"Which previous prime minister has met twice a year with Indian representatives in Parliament, state assemblies and the Senate?"

He said previously, many of the problems the Indian community faced were due to those who claimed the community was a partner in the nation's development but failed to grant it the status of a true partner.

"We know that the leadership of that time, along with government officers, did not show concern for our issues or consider our

problems as those of the nation.

"If we can eliminate racial and religious bias from the minds of government officials and leaders, then we can easily resolve all the problems in the country. All citizens, regardless of race and religion, will receive government services without discrimination."

Xavier said given such a scenario, there would be no need for the prime minister to personally intervene to solve issues affecting the minorities as government officials themselves could resolve them, Bernama reported.

"For example, processing an identity card application or approving it should be the duty of a government officer. Whether the application is delayed or swiftly approved depends on the official. If that officer holds the belief that we too are their fellow Malaysians, the issue can be resolved at the official level.

"Many matters that remain unresolved for years, awaiting special recommendations from ministers or the prime minister, are due to a lack of this consideration by officials."

He added that the mental distress, educational, economic and social impacts caused by such delays are immeasurable, and this is why the prime minister's guiding slogan, "all Malaysians are my children" is a powerful mantra for national unity.