

Reduce sugar intake, exercise more, urges PM

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Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

PORT DICKSON: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has reminded the people to take health knowledge seriously, particularly regarding the dangers of excessive sugar consumption.

The Prime Minister said this is because Malaysia has the highest number of diabetes cases in South-East Asia, reflecting that the level of health literacy among the people in the country remains low.

"Obesity, excessive weight and diabetes rates are prevalent, so please, save the country, save the children, save our families and our parents by controlling sugar intake, (but) not stopping

it completely.

"How do we reduce obesity? By cutting down on carbohydrates, more exercise - but don't jog only during the health campaigns.

"We need to maintain our health. We are busy, but that is a weak excuse.

"We're busy, but we still sleep and eat, so we should also make time to exercise," he said when launching the 2024 National Wellness Month celebration here yesterday, Bernama reported.

Also present were Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad and Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun.

The Prime Minister also said that health literacy or sugar reduction campaigns, as well as health literacy policies, would only be effective if people begin changing their eating habits now.

He said the public should not harm themselves by consuming excessive sugar without considering the impact it has on their health.

At the same time, Anwar urged business owners to play an active role in encouraging the public to reduce sugar intake by being mindful of their customers' health when preparing food and beverages.

"We talk about AI (artificial intelligence), a booming industry, excellent healthcare ... but the public's health literacy is the lowest," he said.

He added that commitment and dedication from healthcare workers are also needed, in addition to health facilities like hospitals and clinics setting a good example by promoting healthy eating and exercise habits.

School canteens should sell healthy food to ensure students' well-being, while the use of sugar in the food and drink menus at government functions should be reduced, Anwar added.