

# STEM subjects are critical, schools told

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**BUKIT MERTAJAM:** The mastery of science, mathematics, English and Malay are important for the nation's development and in fostering mutual respect, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said this is a challenge that needs to be emphasised by the Education Ministry, teachers, parents and pupils themselves.

"With the recent launch of the New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030) by the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry, the education system needs to prioritise subjects like Mathematics, Science, Bahasa Melayu and English to support the country's development," he said in a speech during his visit to his alma mater, Bukit Mertajam High School, here yesterday.

He said since many big projects are developed based on technology, the education system needs to emphasise those subjects.

"Mastering our national language ... as well as mastering the English language, is crucial for us to compete.

"We need to ensure that culture and national language are upheld so that we can acquire new knowledge, which requires a good command of English," he added.

Anwar said strengthening language proficiency and emphasising the importance of mastering English among students is critical.

"If we do not act, we will lose in this competition. To maintain Penang as a global hub in the high-tech and semiconductor industries, schoolchildren must be encouraged, motivated, and pushed to develop an interest in



**Back to school:** Anwar visiting Bukit Mertajam High School, where he used to study, during his working visit to Bukit Mertajam, Penang. – ZHAFARAN NASIB/The Star

Science, - Mathematics and English," he said.

Anwar said priority should also be given to ensuring that education is directed towards science and digital engineering technology.

He said these challenges should be reflected and acted upon by the Education Ministry and teachers.

During his speech, Anwar announced a RM500,000 allocation for Bukit Mertajam High School.

He said RM225,000 will be allocated for a new surau for the school and RM275,000 for its urgent needs.

The Prime Minister said that as a former student of the school, he is grateful for the education foundation he received there.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said Malaysians, especially the younger generation, must not succumb to outdated views that promote discord.

"No religion teaches us to fight or incite hatred," he said.

He then made his way to Hospital Bukit Mertajam for an official visit and went to Masjid Kubang Semang for Friday prayers.

He also spent about 30 minutes chatting with people during his lunch at an eatery next to the mosque.