

# 'Tragedies must not be used as political weapons'

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**PETALING JAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has warned against exploiting the deaths of Zara Qairina and Wan Ahmad Faris Wan Abdul Rahman for personal or political gain, describing such actions as "unacceptable".

Speaking at the Prime Minister's Department monthly assembly yesterday, Anwar said misinformation and speculation on social media following the cases had unnecessarily heightened public anxiety.

He noted a recent example, where an individual falsely claiming to be a pathologist spread misleading information.

"Social media, particularly in emotionally charged situations, can amplify misinformation. I have addressed Parliament to warn against exploiting tragedies for personal gain (*membina mahligai di pusara*)" he said.

Anwar criticised the use of such lies as a "political weapon" stressing that it was wrong to "exploit someone's death for politics or mislead the public".

The Prime Minister acknowledged shortcomings in handling the death of Zara, 13, in Sabah on July 17, including delays and procedural issues but said the authorities were working to address the matter.

"Deputy Prime Ministers Fadillah Yusof and Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, and I have issued statements and we convened a high-level meeting to ensure the investigation is conducted transparently," he said.

Anwar underscored that the bullying culture must be eradicated as it constitutes psychological and physical abuse with serious repercussions for society.

"Certain controversies in the country, especially several cases of the deaths of our children - our child Zara in Sabah, Faris in



Anwar sharing a light moment with staff of the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya yesterday.  
- PIC COURTESY OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Kelantan and others - are said to be bullying cases. I hope we can put an end to this culture," he added.

Zara was found unconscious at 4am on July 16 after allegedly falling from the third floor of her school hostel in Papar, and died the next day at Queen Elizabeth I Hospital.

In December 2013, Wan Ahmad Faris, then 16, was found hanged in the dormitory toilet

of Maahad Tahfiz Sains Nurul Aman, Kok Lanas.

His death was classified as sudden with no criminal elements.

Also present at the assembly were Fadillah, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar and Public Service Department director-general Tan Sri Wan Ahmad Dahlan Abdul Aziz.