



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim being greeted by congregants as he arrives for Friday prayers at Masjid Nur Al-Hidayah in Kuah, Langkawi, yesterday. NSTP PIC BY WAN NABIL NASIR

#### ENSHRINED IM CONSTITUTION

# MASTER BM BEFORE UEC RECOGNITION, SAYS PM

**Amid renewed push to recognise UEC, Anwar says national language must be prioritised**

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**P** RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said there will be no compromise on the mastery and importance of Bahasa Melayu, the national language, amid a renewed push for the recognition of the Unified Examination Certificate (UEC). He said the government remained committed to upholding the principles enshrined in the Federal Constitution on the status of the Malay language. “The focus should be on elevating the use of Malay as a language of knowledge mastered by all Malaysians,” he said. “I have explained. I do not care who they are, which party or which influence. “If I want to be supported as

prime minister, I must uphold the principles of the Constitution.”

Anwar said discussions on language must be inclusive, prioritising Bahasa Melayu while also recognising the value of other languages.

“What is the difference? The difference is the claim; the claim which is directed towards one race and one language.

“I disagree with that completely. First, bring the message of upholding the dignity of the national language.

“Then encompass the need for proficiency in other languages. That, we can accept,” he said after performing Friday prayers at Masjid Nur Al-Hidayah in Kampung Kelibang here yesterday.

Anwar was asked to comment on DAP deputy chairman Nga Kor Ming’s remarks that he planned to meet Anwar over the recognition of the UEC, which the party had long pursued.

People’s Progressive Party (MyPPP) Youth chief Sathiah Sudakaran urged Putrajaya to recognise the UEC as part of educational inclusivity.

He said many UEC graduates had become professionals, academics and community leaders, adding that Sabah and Sarawak had recognised the certificate for

years without adverse impact.

Umno leaders, including deputy president Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan and vice-president Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani, cautioned against the politicisation of the UEC.

Mohamad said the certificate should not be recognised until it aligned with national aspirations and standards.

Anwar said the government did not reject the use of other languages, including efforts to improve English, Mandarin, Tamil and Arabic proficiency at the university level, where English is used for some subjects.

“Let me explain it this way. This is Malaysia. You must remember that Bahasa Melayu is the official language. Bahasa Melayu must be elevated as the language of knowledge that is mastered by all Malaysians.

“If this is clear, I agree if you want to raise the issue of the need for increased use of English. But Bahasa Melayu for new technology fields, for the language of knowledge, must be strengthened.

“Proficiency in it must be good among all citizens, all streams. I do not care if you are Malay, Chinese or Indian; you must master Bahasa Melayu.”