

# Anwar: Ditch issues that undermine unity

**IPOH:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called on all Malaysians to focus on the nation's progress and interests rather than issues that could undermine unity.

He said Malaysia should also serve as a model for strong racial unity.

"This country has great potential.

"There is no need to stir conflicts, (instead), we should uphold the dignity of all communities," he said at the Chinese New Year Open House organised by the Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCCI) here yesterday.

Present were Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Housing and Local Government Development Minister Nga Kor Ming, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Chang Lih Kang, Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad and PCCCI president Datuk Liew Chee Meng.

Anwar also criticised the actions of certain parties who raised concerns about different ethnic groups in the country cel-

ebrating the festivals of other communities.

"Some have raised the issue of Malays celebrating Chinese New Year, Thaipusam — things that have never been a problem for decades are now being made into an issue.

"But do we want to entertain this, or focus on our unity?

"Do we choose to continue having differences of opinion, or do

***"But do we want to entertain this, or focus on our unity? Do we choose to continue having differences of opinion, or do we strengthen unity? And why unity? To boost our economy."***

**PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM**

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"And why unity? To boost our economy."

Anwar said Malaysia was among the countries providing significant contributions to its people to tackle the rising cost of living, demonstrating the government's concern for this global issue.

"For example, the STR (Rahmah Cash Aid) has increased to RM13 billion. That is why we have increased the STR,

because we know the cost of living has gone up.

"This is a problem faced by the whole world, and I have also raised the salaries of civil servants as they have not been increased for 12 years," the prime minister added.