

RM24mil to repair flood damage in Sabah, S'wak

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IPOH: Sabah and Sarawak will be allocated more than RM24mil immediately to repair infrastructure that has been damaged by floods and other disasters, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said the Federal Government would provide aid to states at any given time when disaster occurs.

"If we give RM1,000 to each family when floods hit Perak, I have asked Nadma (the National Disaster Management Agency) to provide the same amount to each affected family elsewhere.

"At the same time, we prepare millions of ringgit for states to carry out repair works. We approve all requests, irrespective state or season, but we do it because it is our responsibility," he said at a kenduri rakyat event at Masjid Al-Muttaqin in Taman Meru yesterday.

The past few days have seen

several parts of Sabah and Sarawak inundated following heavy rainfall, leaving thousands having to flee their homes and seek temporary shelter.

At the Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Chinese New Year open house earlier, the Prime Minister called on Malaysians to focus on shared national goals and reject racial and religious divisions.

Anwar said while there would always be groups wanting to be champions or heroes in their respective areas, the people must not allow issues raised by certain groups to distract them.

"This country must serve as an example of strong unity among all races.

"We must consider everyone's interests, ensure progress for all, and grow the economy for the benefit of all," he said.

Anwar said the focus should be on developing the country's great potential, adding that there was no need to stir up

unnecessary conflicts.

"There have been concerns raised about Malays celebrating Chinese New Year, Chinese celebrating Hari Raya, and people attending Thaipusam.

"These traditions have existed for decades without issues, but now, some try to make them problems. Should we entertain these distractions, or should we focus on our unity? That is the choice we must make," he said.

The Prime Minister said the country cannot rely on getting investments only from certain countries, adding that while it is important to seek investments from the United States, it is equally important for Malaysia to improve relations with the European Union and maintain strong ties with China.

Anwar said some claimed that the government is "handing" everything over to China, to which he pointed out that the country is a major economic power in the region and good

relations with them would benefit the people and economy.

"This is a colonial mentality. For us, it doesn't matter who invests, whether it is China or any other country. We welcome investments and if they are beneficial, we strengthen ties. That is our policy.

"If another country has issues with China, that is their problem, not ours. In fact, during my meetings with President Xi Jinping, I was treated with great respect," he added, referring to the Chinese leader.

Anwar said Malaysia is set to welcome several world leaders beginning next week, strengthening its diplomatic relations with countries worldwide.

He added that the leaders include Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirmonovich Mirziyoyev and Turkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"We need more strategic partners at this time. We cannot rely on just one country," he said.