

# 'Don't overlook humanity'

## PM: It is the Muslim way to extend help to those in need

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**IPOH:** Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has defended Malaysia's decision to assist efforts to rebuild Gaza amid criticisms questioning the country's priorities.

The Prime Minister said any decision he made was viewed as controversial by certain quarters that were dissatisfied with the government.

"Some people say we are just playing games. Some argue that our (own) schools (need attention), yet we want to help others.

"I do not want the importance of justice and humanity to be overlooked," he said at a kenduri rakyat event at Al-Muttaqin Mosque in Taman Meru yesterday.

Anwar said opposing such efforts was not in line with Islamic teachings which encouraged Muslims to extend assistance to those in need.

"When we help other villages, some may ask, what about our village? But in Islam, we are not taught to think that way," he said.

Anwar pointed out that the unimaginable suffering faced by the people of Palestine was the most devastating catastrophe to befall the Muslim community and humanity since World War II.

"When we try to help even a little, the response we get is, 'Fix our own problems first'.

"But there will always be problems at home. Even if we had all the time in the world, they would never be fully resolved. However,



**Warm greetings:** Anwar chatting with guests at the kenduri rakyat event at Al-Muttaqin Mosque in Taman Meru, Ipoh. – Bernama

we can still do something (for others who need help), no matter how small.

On Jan 29, the Prime Minister announced that Malaysia will assist in developing several public amenities under the East Asia cooperation to reconstruct war-torn Gaza.

He said this will be through a joint effort between Malaysia and Japan and will start with the construction of a school, hospital and mosque.

On another matter, the Prime Minister pledged a transparent investigation into the shooting incident involving the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) officers and a group of undocumented Indonesian immigrants in the waters of Tanjung Rhu, Banting.

He instructed that the preliminary investigation report be communicated to Indonesia via the embassy.

"This is only happening because

this country is a good friend, and once the investigation is completed, it will be reviewed by our friends in Indonesia.

"I assure you and emphasise that there must be a transparent investigation and both parties must be informed of the investigation results," he said.

According to reports, the MMEA, while on patrol at 3am on Jan 24, fired shots at a boat allegedly attempting to attack its personnel.