

'Expedite projects to eradicate hardcore poverty, alleviate floods'

PUTRAJAYA: All programmes and projects for the people, including those aimed at eradicating hardcore poverty and implementing flood mitigation measures, must be expedited, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said these issues need to be resolved immediately, without delay.

"I agree that in discussions, we should revise all of them.

"If floods are claiming lives and destroying property, there is no need to wait up to six years to complete a mitigation project," he said at the Prime Minister's Department's monthly assembly here yesterday.

Anwar said all secretaries-general should thoroughly review ongoing projects, adding that failing to do so could leave their successors revisiting the same flood projects upon taking office.

"For example, Phase 1 of the Rantau Panjang (Kelantan) flood mitigation project has been completed, but Phase 2 is scheduled for 2026, and Phase 3 for 2029.

"This means the people of Rantau Panjang will have to wait 15 years for its completion," he said.

If the government needed to borrow or reallocate funds from other areas to expedite these projects, it would do so, he said.

"Let us not raise concerns about the capabilities of state governments. I don't want to hear that. What I know is that the work

must be completed.

"Cooperation and change (in timeline) will certainly involve substantial financial allocations, but if necessary, we will cut (take) the budget from other areas," he said.

"We must address the fundamental issues affecting the people. That is why we prioritise education, healthcare and public safety.

"How can we think this way? We need to sit down, engage in thorough discussions, and go to the ground to understand the challenges the people are facing.

"I hope this issue will receive the attention it deserves," he said.

On another matter, Anwar expressed his gratitude for the country's strong economic performance, thanks to the combined efforts of the leadership team and civil servants at every level.

He said the success was a testament to the hard work and sacrifices of all involved, from senior management to those on the ground.

"We must acknowledge the contributions of everyone, including those at the borders, at the frontlines, and non-uniformed personnel.

"This is a shared success, not the achievement of any one party," he said.

Based on the impressive performance last year, economists



PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

Last year, the government allocated **RM945 million** to implement **119 flood mitigation projects**. Currently, **93 projects** are underway, and **26 are in the pre-implementation stage**.

Key projects include those in:

- Sungai Damansara, Selangor
- Sungai Langat, Selangor (Phase 2)
- Sungai Jelai, Negri Sembilan
- Sungai Pahang, Pahang (River Basin)
- Sungai Triang, Pahang
- Baling, Kedah (Phase 2)
- Sungai Tepoh and Banggoi Air Lilih, Terengganu
- Sungai Kelantan, Kelantan (River Basin Phase 2)
- Sungai Likas, Sabah
- Kuching, Sarawak (Phase 2)

are reportedly forecasting that Malaysia's economy will continue to grow positively this year, with gross domestic product projected to reach up to six per cent.