

# Anwar: It starts from the top

## Accountable leaders essential to good governance, forum hears

By **RAHIMY RAHIM**  
and **TEH ATHIRA YUSOF**  
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

**PETALING JAYA:** The importance of good governance and democratic accountability in Malaysia are among the top priorities of the Madani government, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

This is the thrust of his leadership and leaders must set such examples, he said.

“(Many) countries are destroyed because of arrogance and corruption and that is why, what I attempt to do first in Malaysia, is correct the issue of governance.”

Anwar said this during a one-on-one exclusive dialogue titled “A Conversation with Anwar Ibrahim” moderated by World Economic Forum (WEF) founder and chairman of the board of trustees Prof Klaus Schwab yesterday.

“We inherited some issues and scandals of the past, so we have to be very rigid on that, which is challenging, particularly when corruption is deemed to be systemic.

“The tender process must be transparent, and there must be an effective anti-corruption commis-

sion with adequate legislation and adequate powers. I think that should be a start.”

He also noted that it was important for leaders to have humility.

“Because of the way we are given praise, we tend to forget that it is a learning curve, and the humility to acknowledge that we also have limitations,” said Anwar.

On a separate matter, the Prime Minister said that Asean’s main focus and interest is its economic fundamentals and enhancing trade within the grouping.

This was based on his exchanges with the prime ministers and presidents within Asean, he said.

Asked to share his vision of Asean and if the group would be modelled according to the European Union (EU) with a common currency and internal market, Anwar said that the matter has yet to be explored.

“Our advantage is to study the European Union, along with its successes and limitations.

“We are not too concerned about the political setups (within Asean).

“We are more concerned about economic collaboration. Our main interest is to focus on eco-



**Brass tacks:** Anwar (right) seen during the dialogue moderated by Schwab (left) in Davos, Switzerland. — Bernama

nomic fundamentals.

“Whatever it takes, whether in terms of digitalisation, AI, energy transition, investments, trades, that has always been the focus,” he added.

Anwar also gave his assurance that Malaysia will honour the Paris Agreement.

He said Malaysia has to take a firm stand on the issue of climate change, adhering to the Paris Agreement or any international standards.

“We have to take measures to save our country and society and

if it requires us to observe strictly the understanding which is tied to the Paris Agreement, we have to honour (it).”

Anwar said this when asked if Malaysia would maintain its commitment to human rights and climate change after United States withdrew from the Paris Agreement.

He further elaborated that the Asean Power Grid initiative, which is expected to provide green electricity in the region, has shown rapid progress.

Speaking on human rights in

the Asean region, Anwar said the bloc has reached a five-point consensus on Myanmar after a rigorous and active engagement on human rights.

Malaysia, he said, must also present itself as a united country with multiracial and multiethnic groups.

“We have to showcase that Malaysia is a multiracial country, we are a Muslim majority country with strong ethnic Indian, Chinese groups, and the tribal groups of Sabah and Sarawak. This can be taken as one great family.”