



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim with the Malaysian diaspora in Rome on Tuesday. PIC COURTESY OF PMO

KEEPING COUNTRY STRONG

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PM: TOUGH CHOICES MADE TO HELP PEOPLE

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Unpopular measures taken to ensure development, says Anwar



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ROME

THE government is willing to make hard and unpopular decisions to implement development and projects for the people's benefit, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar, on a three-day working visit here, said that despite the criticism, certain government policies, such as subsidy rationalisation or tariff reviews, needed to be carried out for the good of the country.

"All governments, all prime ministers in the past talk about taking away subsidies from foreigners, but none took the right action."

He said this at a dinner with the Malaysian diaspora here on Tuesday.

He said some measures were implemented to enable the government to build more schools, universities and hospitals.

Anwar said various programmes and policies were being carried out by the government to ensure the country remained competitive.

He said Malaysians living across the globe were a valuable asset to the nation as they were unofficial ambassadors promoting the country on the international stage.

"So I urge them to seize every opportunity and avenue to strengthen their knowledge, skills and networks so they can contribute to the country," he said.

He said the government would ensure the people's welfare and the country's direction amid geopolitical and global economic uncertainties.

Anwar is in Italy at the invitation of his counterpart, Giorgia Meloni.

Accompanying him are Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Transport Minister Anthony Loke, Agriculture and Food Security Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz, and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin.

Last year, trade between Malaysia and Italy grew by two per cent to RM14.61 billion.

From January to May this year, trade

rose by 3.3 per cent from the same period last year to RM6.5 billion. Italy is Malaysia's fifth-largest trading partner in the European Union and the third-largest importer of Malaysian palm oil from the bloc.

I urge (Malaysians abroad) to seize every opportunity and avenue to strengthen their knowledge, skills and networks, so they can contribute to the country.

DATUK SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM