

# Race against time for Felda

Agency has a month to carve out new path, says Anwar

By MARTIN CARVALHO  
mart3@thestar.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) has been given a month to come up with a plan to chart its new direction, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said this was necessary as Felda cannot go on operating on its current path.

"I have given the management one month to come up with a satisfactory approach and new direction.

"We must ensure Felda, its cooperatives and FGV move in a single direction towards a common goal," he said when addressing Felda settlers at a breaking of fast event here yesterday.

The agency was founded in 1956 to handle the resettlement of rural poor into newly developed areas and to organise smallholder farms growing cash crops.

FGV Holdings Bhd is a Malaysia-based global agribusiness and food company.



**Show of generosity:** Anwar presenting aid to orphans as Felda chairman Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek (third from left) and Felda director-general Datuk Dr Suzana Idayu Wati Osman (right) look on during the buka puasa event at Menara Felda yesterday. — IZZRAFIQ ALIAS/The Star

It is an affiliate of Felda.

Anwar said the government would continue to support Felda and currently allocates about RM1bil annually for its operations to ensure the welfare of settlers.

"We must in the shortest time, shore up confidence among the hundreds of thousands of Felda settlers that the time has come for us to make the much needed leap

forward," he added.

Anwar assured settlers that the government would mobilise its available resources and expertise to strengthen Felda.

He said the agency needed to look at all aspects of its operations, including both manufacturing and export.

Anwar assured that the government would continue to promote palm oil as an export commodity.

"The prices of palm oil are linked to demand; we will work towards increasing the demand."

He said he had personally encouraged India and China to increase palm oil import from Malaysia.

He acknowledged that the nation must also prepare for the uncertainties affecting the sector in light of the current global situation.