

AZALINA'S SUGGESTION

'RAISING OF RETIREMENT AGE WILL BE STUDIED'

Proposal has not been presented to cabinet yet, says Anwar

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THE government will review the proposal to raise the retirement age to 65, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the proposal had not been presented to the cabinet but would be tabled for discussion in due course.

He said any decision would take into account the economic and social implications.

"We have not brought it to cabinet yet. Such proposals must be deliberated and presented for the ministers to study.

"They will need to examine its applicability, financial implications and affected demographics, and so on," he said after the launch of Anugerah Hadiah Bahasa here.

On Tuesday, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said the government should consider raising the retirement age to 65, adding that it was her personal opinion.

She said the suggestion stemmed from the concept of "active ageing", noting that many older Malaysians remained ac-

tive and energetic.

Anwar said the idea of increasing the retirement age was reasonable and deserved attention, but must be studied carefully.

"But the relevant parties must look into job opportunities, costs and other implications."

The mandatory retirement age for public servants in Malaysia has been raised three times in 11 years under the Pensions Act and the Pensions Act for Statutory and Local Authorities.

Earlier in his speech, Anwar said Malaysia must aim to become a great and civilised nation not only through economic and financial strength, but also through the richness of its language and cultural heritage.

He said that national development must not come at the expense of cultural identity and linguistic pride.

"While chasing the skies in innovation, we must never forget our roots.

"Our dignity and self-worth as a nation are reflected in the strength of our language and culture."

Anwar added that empowering the Malay language should go beyond slogans and required active participation of schools, universities, government agencies and the private sector.

"If we want to make this a na-

tional agenda, then everyone must be involved."

Anwar also reflected on his visits abroad, noting how countries like China and Russia remained committed to preserving their literary and linguistic heritage despite rapid advancements in technology and the economy.

"In China, even police escorts could recite classical poetry. In Russia, students still study literature deeply.

"These nations have not sacrificed their culture while advancing in science, digital technology and artificial intelligence."

He called on Malaysians not to overlook literature, values and cultural foundations even as the country pursued new knowledge in high-tech fields such as semiconductors, engineering, and AI.

Anwar also announced that

Anugerah Hadiah Bahasa would be held annually, with continued backing from the Education and Higher Education ministries.

The awards are divided into five categories comprising published works, books of various disciplines written in Malay and of high quality, and essays for higher education institutions, pre-university, secondary school and primary school levels.

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DATUK SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
Prime minister