

BEYOND TECHNICAL SKILL

PM: Auditors must uphold universal values

PUTRAJAYA: Auditors, accountants and regulators in Asean must carry out their responsibilities while rooted in human dignity and universal values.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said technical excellence without transparency, accountability and moral clarity was insufficient, particularly in the effort to build independent and trustworthy institutions.

He said a robust auditing system should go beyond managing public finances, to uphold ethical standards and universal human values.

“If we are truly committed to strengthening integrity and transparency, all institutions must be empowered to operate independently and to follow the trail of accountability wherever it leads.

“We want a robust audit system not simply because of artificial intelligence or technology, but because we want to prevent misappropriation, abuse and corruption. We want to protect the dignity of every man and woman,” he said at the closing ceremony of the Asean Auditors’ Conference 2025 at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre.

Anwar said he never interfered in the audit process or the findings of the auditor general, even

though he was regularly briefed.

“Yes, they briefed me two weeks ago, but that was merely for preparation ahead of the cabinet presentation, not for me to interfere or alter the policies.

“The briefing was solely to prepare for the report’s tabling in Parliament. That is what we mean by good governance and transparency,” he said.

Anwar said this approach demonstrated the government’s commitment to institutional independence and the principles of transparent and accountable governance.

He also commended Auditor General Datuk Seri Wan Suraya Wan Mohd Radzi and her team for providing crucial data and evidence to support efforts to improve national governance.

He said it was important for auditors to understand their role not only from a technical perspective but as guardians of moral and ethical principles.

Anwar also lamented the disregard for human values in ongoing atrocities, such as the killing of women and children in Gaza.

“We may have the best audit systems in place, but if we fail to audit values and the human character, then we are abandoning humanity itself,” he said.