

## **PRIORITY ON FOOD, MEDICINE**

# 'Focus on sending aid to Gaza, not volunteers'

**PUTRAJAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has urged non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to prioritise delivering humanitarian aid, rather than focusing on sending large numbers of volunteers to Gaza.

He said the government appreciated Malaysians' strong humanitarian spirit, but the immediate priority was to ensure essential supplies like medicine and food were delivered in an organised manner and in compliance with regulations.

"Do not complicate the situation there with the presence of too many people (volunteers).

"Registration of volunteers to go there have reached the thousands, which is not practical.

"If in future more manpower is needed, we can reassess and send additional assistance," he said after performing Friday prayers at Surau Jannatul Firdaus, PPAM Seruling, yesterday.

He said he met representatives from NGOs like Mercy Malaysia and the flotilla movement.

"They are all committed to helping, but those on the ground in Gaza have advised against sending too many people. They said the workforce is sufficient. What is more important is for us provide

medicine, food and other essentials."

He said the Rafah crossing would be opened to allow in humanitarian aid, but the process must comply with regulations.

"Tomorrow (today), Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi will contact me about 2pm. I will convey Malaysia's view that when Rafah is opened, humanitarian aid should be sent in an orderly manner according to guidelines."

He said the government was ready to hold talks with NGOs if the Gaza situation changes and more experts, like doctors or engineers, were needed.