

Anwar: Guard against extremism

PM cautions M'sians to stay alert as divisive narratives gain ground globally

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KUALA LUMPUR: Ahead of tomorrow's Deepavali celebration, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called on all Malaysians to uphold unity and remain vigilant against any forms of right-wing extremism within the country.

Anwar also said Malaysians should not take for granted the country's multiracial spirit, as celebrating Hari Raya, Deepavali, Chinese New Year and Christmas has always been part of the country's unique culture.

"We assume that this is part of the tradition and culture. But you will be wrong because this is unique to Malaysia, and we must do whatever is necessary to preserve the unity and affection that we share among all races and religions in our country," he said.

Anwar reiterated that the progress and success of various sectors, including the economy, cannot be achieved without a united Malaysia that is both peaceful and stable.

"This is unique in Malaysia because not many countries with multiracial, multireligious entities would preserve that spirit of unity," said Anwar in his opening speech at the Deepavali Madani Open House here, jointly organised by the Digital Ministry and the National Unity Ministry yesterday.

Anwar also said it is concerning that certain parties are playing up racial narratives in their arguments against government policies.

This is because racial narratives appeal to the masses, as is seen in Europe and the United States with the rise of right-wing ideologies, he said.

"The impact of racial narratives is always more powerful, and this is evident in Europe and the US.

"Right-wing extremists have called for attacks on minorities and foreigners. This is the narrative that we should be on guard against," he said.

"That is why Malaysians must be smarter, more aware and exposed to information. This is an



One for the album: Anwar and his wife Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail (third from right), along with (from left) Deputy Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives Minister Datuk Seri R. Ramanan and Digital Minister Gobind Singh Deo attending the Deepavali Madani Open House in Kuala Lumpur. — Bernama

explanation. Democracy will not have meaning if we don't give explanations to the people," he added.

Anwar said it wasn't easy to please all races in Malaysia, as criticisms will always arise when the government announces allocations or aid programmes for a specific race.

"When you speak a bit about bumiputra rights, the Chinese will say something. When you announce additional projects for the Indians, the Malays will say they are being left out.

"This is the narrative brought to villages, cities and even Parliament," he said.

Certain MPs are even making state allocations a racial issue in Parliament, he added.

"For example, if there are extra

allocations to Penang - and just because it isn't a Malay-majority state, it is attacked right away (by MPs).

"They (the Opposition) don't have any points to criticise about Budget 2026, so they raise this up."

Anwar said the government welcomed criticisms, but these must be constructive and not racially motivated.

The government wants to help Malaysians across the country according to needs and not race, he stressed.

One example, said Anwar, is Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia's announcement in June to allocate RM50mil to empower Indian women entrepreneurs.

"These are among the new initiatives by the government," he

said, adding that the Indian community is set to benefit from the additional RM1.2bil allocation channelled to the Housing Credit Guarantee Scheme.

Addressing concerns about the marginalisation of Indian students in the Unit Pusat Universiti admission process, Anwar said the government is working to resolve the issue.

According to Anwar, the Budget 2026 includes an allocation of 1,500 additional university placements that will be available to students from various racial backgrounds.

"I don't agree that this is enough, but as the government, we are finding ways to improve it. That is the essence of reform. Reform means constant improvement and improving our abili-

ties," he said.

While discussing the war against corruption, Anwar stated that it involves all races in Malaysia and that everyone has a role to play in preventing the country from being plundered.

"We must be together to save Malaysia from the corrupt and the greedy; then there will be some light.

"The light is truth and justice. Reject darkness and corruption and oppression. This is the spirit of celebrating Deepavali," he said.