

# PM: BACK HONEST LEADERS

Country can't afford to be led by those who plunder resources and spread hatred, says Anwar

## SANDAKAN

**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called on Malaysians to support leaders who are trustworthy, uphold good governance and put people's interest above personal gain.

Speaking at the Jelajah Wira Madani programme and the 20th anniversary celebration of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) here, he said the nation could not afford to be led by those who plunder resources, spread hatred or abuse power.

"We have heard much about leaders stealing here and there. This culture must stop, and firm

action is necessary.

"Some were wealthy leaders who monopolised major projects, yet they still find fault with others. There must be commitment to put things right," he said.

Anwar, who is finance minister, said leakages, wastage and corruption in national defence and security could not be tolerated.

"Even with billions allocated, a nation will weaken if those entrusted with responsibility abuse it. If guilty of corruption, imprisonment must follow. There can be no compromise."

Anwar praised MMEA for its improved performance following increased allocations. He added that Malaysia's vast maritime areas required disciplined, well-equipped forces to combat challenges like human trafficking, smuggling and intrusions.

At the navy's Region 2 base here earlier, he said the procurement of defence assets must be transparent, prudent and guided by the needs of the armed forces, rather than agents or external companies.

"This procurement system

must be corrected. Priorities must be determined by armed forces' expertise, not dictated by agents or politicians.

"This year's allocation for the Defence Ministry is the highest ever, and everyone is responsible for ensuring that spending is transparent and accountable — this is taxpayers' money," he said at the Sarapan Wira Samudera event.

He highlighted past procurement failures, including naval scandals and project delays, as proof of the dangers of politically driven decisions.

"We want the armed forces to be strong, with new ships and aircraft — not for war, but for security and peacekeeping. Financial management must be prudent and corruption must stop," he added.

The government, Anwar said, would honour defence personnel, including through the civil service salary hike of up to 15 per cent.

Anwar called for the RM190 million military housing project in Batu 10, Sandakan, to be ex-

pedited, instructing the armed forces chief to provide a progress report within two weeks.

He said land issues would be resolved with the state government and the construction of a new RM122 million jetty at the Naval Region 2 headquarters had been approved.

"These projects reflect the government's commitment to safeguard the welfare of armed forces personnel," he said.

In a Facebook post following his engagements in Sabah, he reiterated the importance of rejecting corrupt leaders and divisive movements, citing Mahatma Gandhi: "There is enough on this earth for everyone's needs but not everyone's greed."

He stressed that close cooperation between the federal and state governments would continue to resolve the people's problems.

The 2026 Budget to be tabled on Oct 10 would reflect the Madani government's commitment to strengthening the economy and ensuring the wellbeing of all, he added. **Bernama**