

## FOCUS ON QUALITY

# ANWAR: MASTERY OF BM IS CRUCIAL

Students are also given opportunity to learn other languages, says PM

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**T**HE mastery of Bahasa Melayu by students is crucial to raise the country's education quality, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday.

He said a strong command of the national language does not prevent students from mastering their mother tongue or other languages, such as Arabic and English.

"In this country, students must have a good command of the Malay language. We also have to compete globally, which requires a good command of the English language.

"Our (education) system allows children in Chinese and Tamil schools to master Chinese and Tamil languages, on the condition that they must also master Bahasa Melayu, which is the official language of the country," he

said in an engagement event with the Chinese community at SJKC Perting here yesterday.

Also present were Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail and Bentong member of parliament Young Syefura Othman.

Anwar said the Education Ministry had been instructed to provide an adequate number of language teachers, including in national schools, to ensure that all



Some Bentong residents holding the 'Jalur Gemilang' while waiting for the arrival of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at SJKC Perting yesterday. NSTP PIC BY EIZAIRI SHAMSUDIN

students had the opportunity to learn a second or third language.

"Not just in Chinese SJKs, but also in national schools, for children who want to learn Chinese, Tamil or Arabic. This is our goal going forward, because we do not want endless disputes over the use of languages.

"Our priority is to improve the quality of education for our children so that graduates, like those from SJKC Perting, Bentong, can improve their standing, competing not only within the country or Asean, but also globally. This is our aspiration," he added.

He said there might be minor

differences "but we must not lose focus".

"If we want Malaysia to progress and our children to succeed, we must improve our schools and train more teachers.

"Provide facilities. Master languages. Master digital skills and artificial intelligence. Master mathematics, science and technology. This will determine the future of our children."

At the event, Anwar also announced an allocation of RM13.5 million to repair and build more facilities at the school, with RM300,000 approved immediately for pre-implementation work.