

**LISTEN TO EXPERTS, BUT TAKE HEED OF THE COMMON MAN TOO - PM ANWAR
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JAKARTA, Jan 9 (Bernama) — A common challenge leaders face is ensuring that while input from experts are taken into account in crafting policies, they must also take heed of the common man, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

He said leaders should continue to learn from their observations, experience, and to listen well, not only to experts but also common folk.

“There are things that we can’t hear from experts but only from the people,” he said in a public lecture at the CTCorp Leadership Forum here.

Anwar, who is a well-known figure of reform in Indonesia, stressed that he was not influenced by mere figures and statistics, as there was a big difference between a realistic and an academic approach.

“What’s the figure for poverty? Oh, the hardcore poor is only 15 per cent, it sounds good but if you and your family are in that percentage, you wouldn’t talk that way,” he said.

Quoting T.S. Elliot, he said, “The only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless.”

Hence, humility is vital for leaders in making decisions and policies, he said, stressing that there also should not be a barbarism of specialisation.

“I reminded my Education Minister that the future of Malaysia rest to a large extent on our capacity to acquire knowledge, understanding specialisation, but it cannot be at the expense of humanity, compassion and principles of justice,” he said.

On economic problems, Anwar said that leaders, businesses and conglomerates were responsible in maximising their time and wisdom to improve the situation.

He added that the economic depression that hit amid global uncertainty might not have a solution as yet.

“But, I will not adopt a pessimistic view in politics or economics. I survived (due to optimism), otherwise I would have long succumbed in prison. Even during the most difficult time in the prison, I remained optimistic,” he said.

Anwar also urged companies in both countries to explore new fields like digital economy and artificial intelligence (AI).

“If you’re left behind, then the whole generation will be lost. Malaysia, because of the unending political uncertainty in the past few years, these matters did not become the focus,” he said.

On Malaysia’s direction under his leadership, Anwar said he wanted to be known as a man who is trying to rid the country of corruption, embezzlement and was sincere in championing Malaysians.

“At least this man tried his best, to save the country from the scourge of corruption, abuse of power, he may succeed to an extent, he may not succeed. Totally, I am sure, I will not. At least, there is a recognition he tried his best,” he added.

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