

**PM ANWAR ANNOUNCES RM10 MLN EARLY ALLOCATION FOR AIM'S
'SAHABAT USAHAWAN' PROGRAMMES
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
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KULIM, July 15– Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today announced an allocation of RM10 million for Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM) to help run programmes for its 'Sahabat Usahawan', or micro-entrepreneurs registered with national micro-credit organisation.

He said the amount was an early allocation for AIM, which currently has 326,510 entrepreneurs under its Sahabat Usahawan initiative before a more specific focus will be provided in the MADANI Budget 2024 in October.

“To ensure AIM programmes run smoothly before October in which I can still make a comprehensive study of AIM’s needs, how its activities can be enhanced and for more Sahabat Usahawan to be added, I am announcing a RM10 million allocation for AIM today,” he said.

The prime minister said this in his speech when launching the 'Karnival Sahabat Usahawan AIM' which was attended by some 8,000 Sahabat Usahawan from Kedah and Penang here today.

Present was AIM Board Acting Chairman Datuk Seri Dr Syed Hussian Syed Junid.

AIM, established on Sept 17, 1987, has assisted the government reduce the country’s poverty rate and for four million households to enjoy various benefits through the Ikhtiar Financing Scheme (Economic and Social).

The prime minister said AIM's functions and role in helping women, especially from the B40 group to come out of the poverty trap cannot be denied, and for this reason, he will look into ways on how allocations to eradicate hardcore poverty can also be channelled through AIM.

He said AIM, which has enabled Sahabat Usahawan entrepreneurs to generate income through economic activities, holds a special meaning to him, and recalled how he approved RM200 million in funding to AIM in the 1990s when he was Finance Minister.

"After I was kicked out, from 2012 until now, there has been no allocation, but Alhamdulillah, Anwar is now Prime Minister and I will continue past efforts on how to raise the income of the poor, how to help AIM, and in October, we will have a special programme to assist AIM's development," he said.

However, he said for this to happen, he would need the support and cooperation from state governments, adding that if he continues to get the people's mandate, efforts to assist micro-credit institutions will be among his priorities.

For the time being, he said the AIM management will be asked to provide a detailed report on how AIM can be empowered to enhance its economic activities, boost the number of Sahabat Usahawan and alleviate the pressure of management and service costs.

Earlier, Anwar handed over a RM269.3 million cheque from AIM to Kedah AIM Senior Manager Nor Hayati Hussain and AIM's Sahabat Head of the Board of Representatives (LPS) Zamarina Samsu to be channelled as business capital for Sahabat Usahawan women entrepreneurs in Kedah.

He also handed over a RM105.7 million allocation cheque to Penang AIM Manager Salina Jaafar and Penang and Perlis LPS Head Zariati Abd Hamid.

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