

**GOVERNMENT WON'T FORGET GOOD DEEDS, CONTRIBUTIONS OF
MALAYSIAN RESCUERS IN TURKIYE – PM ANWAR
YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 7 — The government will not forget the good deeds, contributions and sacrifices made by the members of the Malaysian search and rescue (SAR) team involved in the humanitarian mission to Turkiye after the devastating Feb 6 earthquake.

The appreciation was expressed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the launch of the Civil Defence Month celebration and a special luncheon with the team members of Malaysian Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Mission to Turkiye today.

Anwar said carrying out the SAR operations during winter and having to leave their own families for weeks were not easy for the members of the team.

“But that’s what our rescuers, be it from the Armed Forces, Police, Civil Defence, Fire and Rescue Department and others had to do, not just in Turkiye.

“In handling the Johor floods, for example, I can see their proper preparations. The machinery is ready even before the disaster strikes.

“Our civil servants, if we want to assess them, their performance is excellent and as Prime Minister, I am lucky to have a very efficient machinery to help and reduce the burden of the people,” he said.

Also present were the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Sabah, Sarawak Affairs and Special Functions) Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Acryl Sani Abdullah Sani and Chief Commissioner of Civil Defence Aminurrahim Mohamed.

A total of 140 Malaysian rescuers and two tracking dogs were involved in the mission to Turkiye.

During the tabling of Budget 2023 on Feb 24, Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, announced that the government had agreed to give a special allowance of RM100 per day to every member of the team involved in the mission.

Meanwhile, the prime minister said the determination shown by the Malaysian rescuers during the operations was also praised by Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Turkish people.

"Erdogan himself was very sentimental about this and was overwhelmed with emotions when expressing his gratitude and appreciation to Malaysia. He was really touched by what Malaysia has done for them," he said.

On Feb 15, Anwar departed to Gaziantep to observe and meet with the Malaysian rescuers at the disaster site before leaving for Ankara to meet with Erdogan.

The Prime Minister also stressed that the government's move in channelling aid to Turkiye was because the country had done so much to help Malaysia before, including during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

“People asked me why and criticised me because we gave so much to Turkiye. What we gave them is not that much, really.

“When we were in trouble during COVID-19 and economic downturn, many of our investors in Turkiye were affected and at that point in time, President Erdogan had helped us with millions (of dollars) to save our companies in Turkiye,” he said.

On Feb 8, Anwar said Malaysia had channelled over US\$2 million to Turkiye and Syria to help the earthquake victims in the two countries.

The devastating earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale hit southern Turkiye and northern Syria on the morning of Feb 6. The tremors were reported to be felt in Cyprus and Lebanon.

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