

**OPENING ADDRESS YAB PRIME MINISTER AT THE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WELLBEING CONFERENCE 2025
“LIVING TO A HUNDRED: ARE WE PREPARED?”**

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OPENING ADDRESS

THE HONOURABLE

YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM

PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WELLBEING CONFERENCE 2025

LIVING TO A HUNDRED: ARE WE PREPARED?

17th JUNE 2025 (TUESDAY) | 2:30PM

SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh dan salam sejahtera.

Yang Berhormat Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah dan seluruh warga Kementerian Kewangan,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Mohd Zuki bin Ali dan keluarga KWSP,

Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Shamsul Azri bin Abu Bakar,

Ketua Setiausaha Negara;

Rakan-rakan menteri dan tetamu-tetamu yang saya muliakan.

1. Alhamdulillah, kita dapat bersama menjayakan acara yang penting, yang menggambarkan keprihatinan dan ikhtiar KWSP dalam menangani permasalahan semasa. Tentunya menjaga kepentingan

pencarum, tetapi dalam masa yang sama menunjukkan keprihatinan, memikirkan arah tuju daripada masalah yang akan dihadapi oleh negara sekiranya tidak diambil langkah-langkah yang perlu sama ada mengurangkan beban masyarakat itu sendiri, dan juga menunjukkan bahawa kita ini benar-benar memenuhi maksud dan usaha dalam kerangka Ekonomi MADANI.

2. Negara MADANI ini bukan sahaja bicara tentang pertumbuhan yang segar, pelaburan yang bertanggungjawab, dan kerancangan ekonomi ini menjadi keutamaan, tetapi ekonomi dan Negara MADANI juga menuntut supaya kita lebih prihatin, ada ehsan, dan tahu bahawa tanggungjawab kita adalah untuk menjaga dan mengawal kepentingan rakyat, terutama dalam keadaan mereka itu kurang berupaya untuk menyelesaikan masalah mereka sendiri.
3. Dan sebab itu saya alu-alukan ikhtiar dalam merangka untuk bicara soal menua. Dan dalam negara kita telah juga berkenaan kempen dasar yang melibatkan banyak Kementerian, terutama juga Kementerian Kesihatan, kerana beban seperti mana dipaparkan tadi tentunya melibatkan golongan tersebut. Jadi saya ucap terima kasih kepada KWSP, yang memberi penyelarasan, JPM dan Kementerian Kewangan.
4. It's interesting that you've chosen this year theme, "**Living To A Hundred: Are We Prepared?**" Most of us are not even prepared to live up to 70 and 80, but this is a major challenge. As our lifespan lengthen, we must rethink how we sustain our personal well-being,

how we plan our economy, how we reserve the fabric of our cohesive, caring society.

5. The idea of leaving 100 indeed seem remote once, once upon a time. But now we are familiar seeing people around and still active in so slight aggression. Anyway, according to the United Nations World Population Prospects database, Malaysia had only about 10 centenarians in early 70s. Today we don't have only one, we not only have one, you only know one, but actually there was only 1000. Tan Sri Zuki should line them up so that people feel they have a choice. And it's more than likely that we, the number, will continue to grow.
6. The real question now is not whether we are aging, but whether we are adapting. Public policy must take heed. The longevity is a transformation of society, not just a trend. We must ask our institutions, our policies, our thinking prepared for this shift.
7. The global longevity economy is projected to exceed by \$65 trillion by 2030, according to the Global Longevity Economy Outlook report. It's interesting, things have changed. In the years when I was then the Finance Minister, nobody talks about longevity report. Now we have an economy outlook and longevity report internationally.
8. We have no choice. We have to take the responsibility. We're going to be talking about our parents and later ourselves. So, if Malaysia is to be an initiative-taking leader, we must invest in health systems, which

is a major problem. Dr Dzul I don't envy you. I don't know why you should accept to be a Minister of Health. Now, but that is a challenge.

9. Social care, housing, financial tools and industries that serve an ageing society. A long life if it is to be able or see it to be happening when Insya-Allah is a blessing. We all have this even in Islam, we pray, healthy long life, but of course, hopefully to be filled with purpose, opportunity and dignity. And that is why the issue of values and ethics come in. We pray for long life to be good citizens, to be responsible, to be ethically and with the right to be, you know, ethically profound and with the right values.
10. So, it is a responsibility not only in terms of preparing oneself and the family and the society, the nation in any specific field. You are talking about the whole life: health, education, understanding, opportunities and of course additional requirements because of the limitations which comes about with age.
11. The average Malaysian for today now can expect to leave up to 76. That sounds well. But according to the recent surveillance study, only 67 years good health, then after that there will be problems. I'm included in that category. Doesn't sound that bad. That means nine years of poor health, disability or reduced quality of life.
12. Now, regrettably, this gap has not improved over the past two decades. In fact, it has widened from 8.6 years in 2000. This means that living longer does not necessarily guarantee that we are living

better. Well, here I'm not suggesting that better means in terms of physical health or living conditions, but also the quality of life and ethically, morally responsible.

13. This is a wake-up call to make us place a heavier emphasis on investing in our health, particularly in preventive care, public health, education and community-based support systems. We must shift from a system that treats diseases to one that promotes lifelong wellness. We have to take bold steps from now.
14. We have recently launched this Health White Paper. There is anchored in prevention, equitable access and system-wide reform remains our compass, and Budget 2025 reflects our priorities. Now, RM45.3 billion allocated to healthcare, which is a 9.8% increase from the previous year. And still in every cabinet meeting, the Minister of Health complains that he short of funds. So, I said, advise him to go and see Yang Berhormat Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah, Minister of Finance II, not me.
15. Now one key initiative is the mandate for private healthcare facilities and community pharmacies to display medicine prices. A policy that fosters fair competition and helps reduce out-of-pocket spending. Unfortunately, it became another controversial issue. But I hope we can try and resolve this through further engagement. But understand that for the poor, for the elderly, what we need to provide is to tell them and to be able to know the price, what is they are informed and that's all. I find difficulty getting this across because there's so much sentiment, because some would consider that the government tends

to be too autocratic in wanting to determine prices. No. But nothing just to display so that people can decide for themselves. Some people can bring RM100 ringgit and suddenly if the fees, the charges RM150, they will have difficulty. But still I have advised the ministry to further engage, to see how we can further convince the general practitioners in particular and the doctors to accept this proposal. What we are doing is just to protect finances of these families.

16. But ultimately, achieving lasting health reforms requires more than government action. And the Rakan KKM, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia initiative reflects a whole-of-nation approach. That means uniting public institutions with strategic investors to strengthen healthcare delivery.
17. Now, of course, EPF has played a particularly important role here. I must commend EPF for this effort and with the support of other GLICs. This signals a strong public-private partnership focus on enhancing healthcare infrastructure, accessibility and the quality. Creating a system that can support all Malaysians.

Ladies and gentlemen,

18. Let us face the stark truth and reality. A longer life raises expenses for individuals, families and governments. But we all pray for long life, so we have to deal with this. Now, tackling this challenge starts by ensuring that work pays fairly. A long life must be matched by decent wages, dignified work and a fair share of a national prosperity. That's

precisely the reason why under Ekonomi MADANI, we are committed to increasing the labour share of income to 45% of GDP, up from 32% in 2023.

19. We increased minimum wage by 13% this year. Our progressive wage policy and the leadership shown by GLICs through the Gear-up initiatives are examples of how structural change begins with just action. But fair wages alone are not enough. We must strengthen our social protection system to prepare for longer, more complex lives. More recently, the extension of EPF coverage of migrant workers marks a significant step in strengthening social protection. I also commend EPF steps, we have to recognize and acknowledge the EPF has done remarkably well. And they are continuing to explore new approaches to enhance retirement adequacy.
20. As people live longer, the focus must shift from the lump sum savings to sustainable retirement income. So, we must start thinking about how to build a system that reflects greater solidarity, particularly for those with limited lifetime savings and earnings.
21. In our government's vision, no Malaysian should grow old in fear of poverty, fear of abandonment, or fear of irrelevance. Older Malaysians today are healthier, more educated and more capable than ever. With the right support, insya-Allah, we can continue contributing through work, mentorship or community service.

22. Around the world, countries are rethinking labour and retirement policies in response to longer, healthier lifespans and evolving workplaces. Many nations have begun adjusting retirement ages, balancing fiscal sustainability with individuals' desire for continued engagement. These reforms are accompanied by increased workplace flexibility and efforts to foster age-inclusive environments.
23. The reimagining of the workforce comes at a time when our labour market is undergoing again structural shifts. Our economy is being reshaped by macro entrepreneurs, gig workers and the self-employed. So, under Ekonomi MADANI, we are committed to raising the ceiling by investing in digitalization, inclusive innovation and SME growth.
24. Through programmes such as SME Digitalization Grant, the National Industry ESG Framework, and targeted support from TEKUN and Bank Simpanan Nasional, we are laying the groundwork for an inclusive, innovation-driven economy. And as we prepare for longer lives, we must also protect the world in which those lives unfold, which means a truly sustainable longevity economy is one that serves both people and the planet, building the environment.
25. Now in Islam, for example, we are taught that well-being is a trust (Amanah) not merely a privilege. Taklif, not the Tasyrif—amanah, responsibility and not a privilege. And that social and economic development must serve both the hereafter and the present world. So, we are reminded that there must be a fair balance between the hasanah of dunya and the hasanah of akhirah.

26. So, with that I must thank you again for this meeting conference to digest ideas. Very difficult to resolve, but hopefully you come out some brilliant ideas how we could try mitigate the issues at hand. And may Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala give us guidance and protection.

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.

Thank You.

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