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Sejahtera Madani initiative launched to rid poverty



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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called for deeper collaboration between the public and private sectors to eradicate hardcore poverty, stressing that targeted interventions must be consistent, inclusive and sustained.

Launching the Sejahtera Madani initiative (Malaysia Madani People's Well-being Initiative) at Kompleks Seri Perdana yesterday, he said while data points to progress in tackling extreme poverty, the government is pushing for more, via a whole-of-nation approach.

"Our goal, as a Cabinet, is to begin putting a full stop to hardcore poverty. Based on data from 2023 and 2024, we have managed to reduce it significantly, although the full figures will be released later."

A total of 306,403 heads of households are registered in the national eKasih system as of July 15, according to the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) under the Prime Minister's Department.

Of these, 1,017 are categorised as hardcore poor while 305,386 fall under the poor category. The government has set a target of reducing poverty by 33% by the end of the year.

The Sejahtera Madani initiative, spearheaded by the ICU, brings together ministries, agencies and corporate partners to deliver sustainable, high-impact support across four key pillars - income generation, education, housing and welfare.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said the initiative had exceeded expectations by raising nearly RM120 million, far surpassing its initial target of RM50 million.

"I said if Sejahtera Madani could raise RM50 million, that would already be a success, and the government could top it up a bit. But today, the amount has not only doubled but also gone far beyond that."

"The initiative has now raised nearly RM120 million. This is a meaningful project, and we want to drive this nation to become strong and great."

Several companies have stepped up to contribute to the Sejahtera Madani initiative, including Berjaya Corporation Bhd, which pledged RM10 million. A mock cheque was presented to Anwar by Berjaya Land Bhd deputy chairman Datuk Seri Robin Tan.

Also present at the launch were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming, Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar.

Anwar also acknowledged companies such as Westar, YTL, Telekom Malaysia, Tenaga Nasional and Petronas for their involvement in community efforts, including employment

➤ Govt pushing for greater public-private sector partnerships to deliver sustainable support for income generation, education, housing and welfare: PM



Anwar, Ahmad Zahid and Shamsul Azri (with songkok) with Tan (left) and other contributors during the launching ceremony at Kompleks Seri Perdana in Putrajaya yesterday.
 - BERNAMAPIC

initiatives, school repairs and technical training programmes.

He said a standout example is the collaboration between companies and TVET institutions, enabling students to receive hands-on training and industry exposure.

"Some of the best models come from companies that work with TVET schools to uplift students through practical training and clear career pathways."

He described these efforts as more than symbolic, rejecting the term "adopted schools" and instead using "lifted schools", where active involvement from top management inspires hope and motivation among underprivileged students.

Anwar also addressed opposition criticism over the government's RM1 billion allocation for school infrastructure, which he said had been misrepresented as solely for toilet upgrades.

"Although we were mocked and accused of spending RM1 billion just to build school toilets, we have actually repaired 1,200 of them."

"Just imagine. These were the toilets left in a state of disrepair in schools where our children and grandchildren study."

He clarified that the infrastructure effort is ongoing, with hundreds of millions also allocated to upgrading military housing.

"We welcome any proposal that improves people's lives. If a major development company says, 'let us adopt this school, fund the repairs and manage the works ourselves', we're all for it."