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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (centre) speaking at the PM Department's monthly assembly in Putrajaya yesterday. With him are Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof (second from left), ministers Dr Zalihah Mustafa (left) and Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar, and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar (right). NSTP.PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

'CONTINUOUS MONITORING'

PM: TACKLE POVERTY, FLOOD WOES SWIFTLY

Urgent need to expedite efforts to ensure people's wellbeing, Anwar tells civil servants

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DATUK Seri Anwar Ibrahim says there is an urgent need to address issues concerning the wellbeing of the people.

The prime minister said this included the elimination of hardcore poverty and speeding up the tender process for flood mitigation projects.

He acknowledged progress had been made in reducing poverty, but stressed that more work was needed to ensure no one was left behind.

"I checked, for example, how many people remain in the hardcore poverty category in the Tambun constituency. There are around 15 cases and in Perak, perhaps a little over 100.

"I told my friends in Tambun that these 15 cases could be identified and resolved within two days.

"The same applies to the federal territories... I managed to contact (the minister in the prime minister's department for federal territories) Dr Zalihah Mustafa to ensure

that the issue is being addressed, whether through the zakat programme or other efforts.

"This is what I mean by continuous monitoring. Even if we resolve cases in October, there will be more people who will fall into poverty again by November and that is something we accept.

"But we must act quickly because, for these families, hardcore poverty is a major issue," he said at the Prime Minister's Department's monthly assembly yesterday.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, Dr Zalihah and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

Meanwhile, Anwar said he had also requested the acceleration of the tendering process for flood mitigation projects, as some have been taking too much time.

"I have requested that, where possible, flexibility be given so that these projects can be expedited through immediate allocations.

"Why do we emphasise the tender process? Because I have observed that when we rely on negotiations, there tend to be excesses and leakages. Therefore, it is best to use the tender system.

"However, tenders can sometimes take too long for ordinary projects and those affected by floods cannot afford to wait.

"I hope these matters receive the necessary attention. But what I want to emphasise is that God willing, we must continue to improve our practices, enforcement and

care for the people."

Anwar also touched on Malaysia's Asean chairmanship, saying the country would leverage its role to demonstrate the efficiency of its civil service in managing various programmes.

He said the Asean chairmanship was not just a matter of status for the country, but a reflection of the civil service's ability to ensure smooth governance.

"This will certainly require tasks beyond the usual. (But) from my observation, our level of preparation for these programmes is among the best.

"While it may not be as luxurious as in some other countries, the level of efficiency, discipline, and meticulousness is truly commendable," he said.

Anwar expressed his appreciation for civil servants' dedication to ensuring smooth governance, particularly in preparing for official programmes involving international leaders.

He added that such dedication often received little media or social media coverage.

He recalled meeting several civil servants from various agencies who were working on Sunday to prepare for the visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"I saw many of them still on duty, working diligently and with warm smiles to ensure that everything was in place for President Erdogan's visit the next day. So, I salute all those who worked so well," he said.