

PM: Official letters not in BM will be returned

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‘Championing national language important for nation-building’

CYBERJAYA: “Return to Sender” – this is the directive to government departments if they receive official letters in languages other than Bahasa Malaysia, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

“I want to remind the public and private sectors of the directive that those who correspond in a language other than the national language, their letters will be sent back,” the Prime Minister said.

He said there was a lackadaisical attitude over the use of the national language in official letters sent to government departments and universities.

“We agree with the use of English as the international trade language, but there is an attitude that I feel has gone too far and has deviated among some government departments, universities and private universities, including the private sector, which attempts to abandon the basis of the Constitution with regard to communicating with the government in the national language,” he said.



Making a difference: Anwar looking at the books at the launch of Karnival Dekad Bahasa Kebangsaan and Dekad Membaca Kebangsaan at Multimedia University in Cyberjaya. — AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star

This directive should not be taken lightly, and a clearer one will be issued by the Civil Service Department on the matter, Anwar said when launching the Karnival Dekad Bahasa Kebangsaan and Dekad Membaca Kebangsaan at Multimedia University here yesterday.

Anwar also said that achieving economic success would mean little if the national language, which was part of the national culture, was not championed.

“I remind my friends that I would not have lectured at Washington University if I had not mastered the English language. “But coming down to earth and championing the national language is something important for nation-building,” he added.

He also urged the younger generation to inculcate the reading habit, which has eroded over the past few years due to social media.

Meanwhile, when met after the event, Anwar said he would explain the mechanism for distributing targeted subsidies in Parliament soon.

“It is better that I use Parliament as the venue to explain targeted subsidies,” he said but declined to specify when he would do it.

Targeted subsidies are expected to be rolled out in phases next year as part of his administration’s efforts to trim the government’s subsidy bill and ensure that they only benefit low-income groups.