

# Anwar reiterates reason for Urban Renewal Act

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim Friday reiterated that the government's move to introduce an Urban Renewal (PSB) Act is rooted in the need to provide better living conditions for Malaysians long trapped in dilapidated housing.

Anwar said that the legal status of land involved in the urban renewal projects will remain unchanged, regardless of whether it is privately owned, under state authority, or located on Malay Reserve land.

"There are people living in public housing (PPR) flats that are over 50 years old, in overcrowded, uncomfortable conditions, plagued by serious social and disciplinary issues, all due to prolonged pressure and neglect.

"That is why it is our responsibility to focus on these areas and rebuild the housing. Unfortunately, this initiative is being politicised and falsely portrayed as an attempt to steal Malay land or as part of a so-called Chinese agenda to displace Malays from the city," he said at the launch of the Warisan KL: Warisan Ibu Kota Malaysia Madani project, Friday.

Present were Federal Territories Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar, and City Mayor Datuk Seri Dr Maimunah Mohd Sharif.

In his speech, Anwar cited the Seri Perlis flats as an example of poor living condi-

tions, describing them as "most suffocating" and expressing personal disappointment over the situation.

"If we continue to allow such conditions, I wouldn't be proud as Prime Minister if I couldn't do something to rebuild and improve these homes," he said.

At the same time, the Prime Minister said the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) will ensure that temporary housing for residents during the urban renewal projects will prioritise comfort and essential amenities.

He also gave assurance that the development projects would be implemented as soon as they are approved, emphasising the importance of quick action to alleviate the suffering of affected families.

"Delaying the project by three months means prolonging the hardship of these families for three more months. To those causing the delays, I would send them to live in those temporary homes to experience firsthand the hardship and suffering of having to wait," he said.

Prior to this, Anwar reportedly said that urban renewal is not a new agenda under the Madani Government but had already begun in 2012 with the formulation of the Urban Renewal Guidelines.

He explained that initial discussions for the creation of a specific urban renewal act began in 2013 to streamline development around Kuala Lumpur, with the formal drafting of the act being announced in 2015.