

GOVT DEPTS REMINDED NOT TO ENTERTAIN LETTERS WRITTEN IN LANGUAGE OTHER THAN NATIONAL LANGUAGE

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CYBERJAYA, Oct 25 (Bernama) — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today reminded all government departments not to entertain any letters written in a language other than the national language.

In his speech at the opening of the National Language Decade carnival and National Reading Decade here, Anwar said he noted that there is a tendency by some parties to deny the fundamentals of the Federal Constitution which requires them to communicate with government departments in national language.

“So, I would like to give a reminder (to all government departments), that if they receive a letter from local companies or public and private universities in a language other than the national language, just return it to the sender.

“The empowerment of culture, language, and literature is an integral part of nation-building, so let us not underestimate it.

“And I hope this reminder is duly noted. The directive is clear, and the Director-General of Public Service (KPPA) Datuk Dr Zulkapli Mohamed is also here...that we shall not entertain any letters written in a language other than the national language,” he said.

Article 152 of the Federal Constitution states that the Malay language or Bahasa Melayu is the national language.

Anwar said such an action would not make Malaysia narrow-minded because the government does not undermine the importance of English proficiency.

“This does not make us narrow-minded because I often remind my friends that I would not have been invited to teach at Georgetown University in Washington DC if I had not mastered the English language. I never underestimate it (the importance of English proficiency),” he said.

Meanwhile, Anwar said the love and the culture of reading should be instilled in children at a young age so that it will develop as a passion, and not merely to pass an examination.

“I hope reading culture should be revived because as soon as we can read, analyse, and understand, then, Insya-Allah we can master in-depth knowledge in all fields. Otherwise, we will just become shallow intellectuals,” he said.

— BERNAMA

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