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Raising the ceiling and floor

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Nation must drive investments and offer better salaries, says PM

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SUBANG JAYA: The nation's path to stronger economic progress lies in raising the quality of development, a goal set out under the Madani framework, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the government must "raise the ceiling" by driving investments in new industries and technologies, while at the same time "raising the floor" to ensure better salaries and inclusive growth for all.

Speaking at the launch of CelcomDigi's CD:NXT programme,

Anwar said Malaysia must embrace emerging sectors such as digital transformation and renewable energy while addressing core industries including agriculture.

He pointed to major projects under way such as the Asean Power Grid, which will connect Vietnam to Kelantan and Singapore, as well as Sarawak to Peninsular Malaysia, southern Philippines and Indonesia.

"If we do not raise the ceiling and remain stagnant, the nation cannot be regarded as successful.

"Our children will not have access to better jobs, unemployment will rise and poverty will

not be resolved," he said.

Anwar stressed that private sector success must translate into public benefit.

"What does CelcomDigi's success mean, or that of other giant companies, if it does not ensure that their achievements also benefit the wider rakyat?"

"Training for our youth, developing their talents and skills, their intelligence and ability to explore new disciplines, this must be our focus," he said.

He also congratulated CelcomDigi and Khazanah Nasional for investing in research, training and innovation, particularly through CD:NXT.

"This is exactly what we mean by raising the ceiling," Anwar said, adding that raising the floor was equally important to ensure higher wages and inclusive opportunities for Malaysians.

The Prime Minister also underscored the importance of clean and transparent governance.

"Without good governance, whether in government or companies, the nation cannot succeed," he said.

On artificial intelligence (AI), Anwar cautioned against assuming technological adoption alone would increase productivity.

Referring to what he called the "productivity paradox," he cited

the computer era when expectations of a paperless environment instead resulted in greater bureaucracy.

"Introducing AI does not automatically mean higher productivity.

"That is why research and innovation are vital," he said.

At the same time, Anwar urged Malaysians to master new technologies while staying grounded in national identity.

"We must reach for the skies with advanced technology, but remain rooted to the earth; to our language, culture, identity and the spirit of Malaysia," he said.