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I am not quitting, says Anwar

DATUK Seri Anwar Ibrahim denounced his detractors at the last day of the 51st Umno General Assembly yesterday, saying that he will not bow to pressure and quit his job as Finance Minister.

"In the past two months, I have been rumoured to have quit as Finance Minister eight times. Why do people want me to quit as Finance Minister so much?

"I am not quitting. I have a duty to help the Prime Minister ..." he said to the applause of Umno delegates.

Calling for a stop to such callous activities, Anwar said,

"A lot more needs to be done, especially at a time when the country's economy is facing external pressures. We have to manage our economy efficiently and strengthen our political stability. These (activities) have to stop. Why do we demean ourselves to the lowest of beings by doing this?"

Anwar, who is the Deputy Prime Minister and Umno's deputy president, said he draws his strength from Dr Mahathir in facing the slanders hurled at him. The Prime Minister often advised him to be patient.

"It (Dr Mahathir's advice) was a really great help," Anwar said.

"He told me that he, too, had gone through a similar predicament, when he was said to have a wife in Singapore. If he did not say this, I would have believed (the rumour)," Anwar added, drawing laughter from the delegates.

Anwar said he is saddened by the turn of the events during the past months and had filed a police report on the poison pen letters on August 15.

Saying that there had been other poison pen letters before in his tenure as a politician, the recent ones were "too much."

He said he is grateful to his wife, Datin Seri Wan Dr Azizah Ismail, family and friends, and party members who believed in him and held special prayers for him.

He also shared with delegates a pantun he had written while under detention at Kamunting, Perak. He dedicated the pantun on a true warrior to Dr Mahathir.

"Bunga Kamunting di dalam pagar,
Kembang wangi semerbak sunyi,
Dengan helah pencak pendekar,
Tak kan tergugat pahlawan sejati."

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