

Cops move in to disperse defiant Anwar supporters

5-29-9-98

KUALA LUMPUR: The police dispersed about 1,000 supporters of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who had gathered in front of the Sultan Abdul Samad building yesterday.

About 70 protesters were arrested when Federal Reserve Unit personnel and plainclothes policemen charged at the crowd on two separate occasions in Jalan Raja and Jalan Raja Laut.

The police were forced to take action when the supporters refused to heed orders to disperse.

Earlier, at 5pm, a large crowd had converged along Jalan Raja near Dataran Merdeka.

Eighty-five minutes later, some 400 supporters started shouting *reformasi* for the benefit of

foreign and local television crew who were covering the anticipated gathering.

An unidentified protester gave the electronic media a thrilling footage when he performed a *silat* while taunting the police to arrest him. He was arrested.

At 6.30pm, a man gave a two-minute speech while being surrounded by 200 people shouting *reformasi*.

He threw in the air two banners which read "Free Anwar" and "Mahathir undur" (Mahathir resign).

Two minutes later, the crowd spilled into Jalan Raja and some 700 people marched towards Dayabumi.

FRU personnel arrived in several trucks and sta-

tioned themselves at the Lebuhr Pasar and Jalan Raja junction at 6.40pm.

Seven minutes later, they advanced towards the crowd which had refused to disperse despite several warnings.

The FRU dispersed the crowd and proceeded towards the supporters who had regrouped at Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman and Jalan Raja Laut.

The police ordered them to disperse but the crowd, now reduced to about 600, hurled verbal abuses and sang *Barisan Kita* instead.

Ten minutes later, after the roads were cleared of traffic, the FRU members advanced to Jalan Raja Laut and Jalan Tun Perak and the crowd retreated.