

20 SEP 1998

Anwar-Mosque

ANWAR BRINGS HIS REFORM MOVEMENT TO MASJID NEGARA

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 20 (Bernama) -- Former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today took his reform movement to Masjid Negara (National Mosque), here, where he held a ceramah to thousands of his supporters.

After delivering a 30-minute speech, lashing out at Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he led the crowd to the nearby Merdeka Square.

The square was filled with weekend crowd, most of them waiting to watch cultural performances in conjunction with Malaysia Fest '98 and Commonwealth Cultural Festival.

Earlier at Masjid Negara, the Negeri Sembilan Umno Youth chief Ruslan Kassim requested the crowd to say praise to Prophet Muhammad, amid shouts of "Allahuakbar" (God is Great) and "reformasi" (reformation).

Anwar and his wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail arrived at the mosque at about 4.45pm.

Dr Wan Azizah spoke briefly followed by Anwar.

Anwar, among others, repeated his call for Dr Mahathir to step down.

He also said the people of Kubang Pasu had invited him for a ceramah tomorrow night.

Anwar was sacked from the government on Sept 2 and expelled from Umno the following day for alleged sexual misconduct, selling state secrets and corruption.

He had denied the allegations, saying there was a high-level conspiracy to ruin him.

At Merdeka Square, Dr Wan Azizah addressed the crowd and read out what is termed as the "Sept 20 People's Pledge," which among others, called for Dr Mahathir's resignation.

Anwar did not speak as he could not get to the stage because he was blocked by the crowd.

From the square, the crowd marched along Jalan Raja Laut to Umno headquarters at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

From there, some of them proceeded to Sri Perdana, the official residence of the Prime Minister at Jalan Damansara.

They were stopped by the Federal Reserve Unit (FRU) personnel who used water cannons and tear gas to disperse them.

-- BERNAMA

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