

Anwar unfazed by Sembrong attack
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Despite the attack against PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim at a ceramah in Sembrong, Johor, last Sunday, the opposition leader vowed that he would not be cowed by such violence.

Relating the incident in which his vehicle was stoned and kicked, Anwar said he arrived in Sembrong at 11.30pm from Endau.

"Soon after I got to Sembrong, my car was attacked and dented by a group of youngsters, and the mirrors were broken," he told some 1,000 people at a ceramah in Gombak Setia, Selangor, last night,

"There were police around, but they were unable to control the situation. And when I was about to present my speech, the youngsters threw firecrackers," he said.

These youngsters, Anwar claimed, were paid to create trouble and blamed Umno for making use of the youths.

"They were paid RM20 and they created trouble... This is how far the mentality of our youth has been damaged at the hands of Umno. If there is any Umno remnant in you, discard it. Please stop, it shames us.

"Don't be fools or try to fool others - be someone who has pride," Anwar said before singing a line from the Umno song, "Lambang kita yang gagah" (Our mighty symbol), to the amusement of the crowd.

Umno, he added, could hire thugs to harass him and even condemn him in the media, but his response would always be: "I will not be moved."

PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution had said yesterday some 50 to 80 youngsters on motorcycles had disrupted the Sembrong ceramah by blasting their motorcycle horns and revving the engines.

The incident was just one of a series of disruptions of PKR ceramah sessions in recent weeks as Anwar makes his foray into BN strongholds ahead of an impending general election.

Last Monday, Anwar's visit to Felda Ghafar Baba at Machap in Alor Gajah, Malacca, was marred by rowdy Umno supporters who came to disrupt his ceramah, and last Friday, a roadblock was set up during his ceramah in Pekan, Pahang.

Let's debate on Israel, Anwar tells Umno

The ceramah last night was intended to clear the air over the controversy Anwar's alleged support for Israel.

Anwar explained that his statement had been taken out of context as he had told Wall Street Journal that the security of Israel was "contingent" on that country's respect for the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

"But perhaps TV3 has poor English and could not understand the word 'contingent'. Maybe they thought it was the Commonwealth sports contingent," he quipped.

"I have consistently defended the issue of Palestine, but Umno says I support Israel and condemns me. If this is true, then let's debate."

Noting the face-to-face debate between the MCA and DAP chiefs last Saturday, Anwar said he would be pleased if Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak took up his challenge for a debate.

"Don't worry, I'll be nice, like how I treated (Youth and Sports Minister) Ahmad Shabery Cheek the last time," he said.

Anwar had in 2008 went into the ring with Ahmad Shabery in a live telecast debate on petrol price and oil royalty.

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