

Parliament reforms strengthen democratic accountability, says PM

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Bernama

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has emphasised that ongoing parliamentary reforms are vital to strengthening democratic accountability and ensuring a system of governance that truly reflects the people's aspirations.

Anwar highlighted several key initiatives, including the enactment of the Parliamentary Services Act (PSA) 2025, the establishment of parliamentary special select committees (PSSC) and the introduction of the Prime Minister's Question Time, as significant milestones that marked a shift towards greater transparency and accountability in the parliamentary process.

He noted that with strong support from the Dewan Rakyat and Dewan Negara speakers, Malaysia had successfully advanced one of its boldest institutional reforms through the PSA.

"Malaysia has embarked on some of these reform agendas, and I'm proud to say that with the support of both speakers, we have introduced a very radical shift, what we call the PSA, an outstanding achievement because the institution of

Parliament has become totally independent of governmental management.”

Anwar made the remarks when officiating the 46th general assembly of the Asean Inter-Parliamentary Assembly at the World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur today.

The premier said that the reform received bipartisan support with the government and opposition agreeing on its importance in strengthening parliamentary independence.

He said another important step was the creation of PSSC, which involve participation from government and opposition lawmakers to provide checks and balances, as well as to ensure Parliament remains representative of all voices.

Healthy discourse

Anwar pointed out that the introduction of the Prime Minister’s Question Time had placed the government under greater scrutiny, requiring direct answers on key issues each week.

“I wasn't sure whether I made the right decision, but I am stuck with that on a weekly basis now. I think, upon studying our personal reflections and views on this, I must say that it is healthy discourse.

“It puts the prime minister and the government on guard, and that gives the real meaning in essence to what we call democratic accountability,” he added.

Not just about election

Reiterating the true essence of democracy, the prime minister stressed that democracy is not confined to elections every four or five years.

Instead, he said it is a continuous process where the ruling party must be open to being questioned, criticised and assessed by the public and be responsible for the commitments they make.

In his remarks, Anwar also reminded parliamentarians that accountability applied to all and that elected representatives must serve the interests of the people rather than personal gain.

“Honour your oath of office and the spirit of accountability and the right for the citizens to question. Of course, in the realm of control and influence by social media, there are times when people can be misled.

“Notwithstanding, it is our duty to perform to the best of our ability to honour our commitment and our oath of office,” he said.

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