

PM wins vote after heated debate

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Motion of confidence approved after chaos erupts in august House

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KUALA LUMPUR: There were shouting matches and taunts of “beruk” (ape), and so the newly-sworn in Speaker had to get stern before the motion of confidence for the Prime Minister was approved with a voice vote in the Dewan Rakyat.

The Opposition also chose not to vote on the motion and it was carried with the support from the government bench.

“More voices agreed, hence the motion has been passed,” Speaker Datuk Johari Abdul said after 12 MPs had debated the motion before it was put to a voice vote.

The exchanges in the Dewan was heated at certain points as MPs from both sides traded barbs.

The debate began with Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin (PN-Larut) and the others who joined in were Lim Guan Eng (PH-Bagan), Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Hassan (PN-Kota Baru), Datuk Seri Doris Sophia Brodie (GPS-Sri Aman), Datuk Seri Ronald Kiandee (PN-Beluran), Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani (BN-Titiwangsa), Ahmad Fadhi Shaari (PN-Pasir Mas), Rafizi Ramli (PH-Pandan), Datuk Wan Saiful Wan Jan (PN-Tasek Gelugor), Datuk Dr Jeffrey Kitingan (Sabah STAR-Keningau MP), Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (PH-Kuala Selangor) and Datuk Seri Bung Mokhtar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan).

Hamzah branded the agreement between members of the unity



It's official: Anwar being sworn in as Member of Parliament for Tambun before Johari at the first meeting of the first session of the 15th Parliament at Parliament House. Also seen is Ayer Hitam MP Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (third row, left). — Bernama

administration as illegal, and labelled the motion of confidence as a “mere gimmick”.

He said the agreement restricts, spoils and undermines parliamentary democracy as enshrined in the Federal Constitution, as MPs now had to support the Prime Minister or lose their seats.

This, he said, was seen as legitimising the government of the day

including in the motion of confidence and Supply Bills.

He said political parties would also have to ensure their MPs toed the line as failure to do so would put them at risk of losing their seats.

“The agreement requires MPs from all parties in PH, BN, GPS, GRS and Warisan to vote as YAB Tambun (Anwar) wants,” he said.

“This goes against the basic prin-

ciples of parliamentary democracy.

“It is illegal, as it runs against the Federal Constitution and public policy. It is illegitimate and is not allowed as per the law.”

The motion was tabled by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof (GPS-Petrajaya) who said it was important for the unity government to secure the confidence of lawmakers in view of the projected

economic downturn next year.

“This will strengthen the confidence of investors, the business community and the people,” he said, adding that the support would allow the unity government to render the best services to the people.

“The government must be supported for the success of the country and the welfare of the people,” he added.

At a press conference after the meeting, Perikatan Nasional’s parliamentary chief whip Takiyuddin said the Opposition did not vote as it did not want to be seen as being in support of the “illegal” agreement among the members of the unity government.

“We are confident that not all members who signed the document agreed with the government’s decision. But they did not have a choice,” he said at the Parliament media centre yesterday.

“Our stand is that we did not vote or voice our agreement during the vote because we did not want to take part in a vote for an illegal and unconstitutional document,” he added.

Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil said in another press conference that the passing of the motion reflected the support of the 148 MPs for Anwar’s government and would put an end to the political turmoil in the country.

Only two previous prime ministers have gone through confidence votes in Parliament – Tun Hussein Onn in 1976 and Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in 2003.