

# Anwar's legitimacy as prime minister proven in Parliament

The Sun - 22/12/2022 5.2

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The first meeting of the first session of the 15th Parliament earlier this week marked an important milestone in the history of the unity government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

On the first day of the meeting last Monday, Anwar's legitimacy as the country's 10th premier was proven when the motion on the vote of confidence brought by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof was passed via a voice vote.

The result of the vote was announced by newly elected Speaker Datuk Johari Abdul.

Law and Institutional Reforms Minister Datuk Seri Azalina Othman put to rest the Opposition's allegations that the motion was very much influenced by the unity government's Cooperation Agreement Among Coalitions, which it claimed was a mechanism of force on MPs.

She said although the vote of confidence in the prime minister was not compulsory, the government itself had taken the initiative to table the motion, and

➤ Govt took initiative to table vote of confidence, and motion was valid as it did not violate Federal Constitution, says law minister

it did not violate the Federal Constitution and was valid.

The first day of the meeting also saw the election of Johari as speaker, replacing Tan Sri Azhar Azizan Harun.

The former Gurn assemblyman garnered 147 votes against the other nominee, former home minister Tan Sri Mohd Radzi Sheikh Ahmad, who obtained only 74 votes.

Johari's name was proposed by Anwar for the government, while Mohd Radzi was nominated by Opposition Leader Perikatan Nasional secretary-general Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin.

Azhar Azizan left the speaker's post vacant when he stepped down on Dec 18 after holding it from July 13, 2020.

Cameron Highlands MP Datuk Ramli Md Nor and Lanang MP

Alice Lau were elected as Dewan Rakyat deputy speakers with 148 and 146 votes, respectively. Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin, another candidate, only garnered 74 votes.

Good news for the people started pouring in on the meeting's second day. A mini budget through the Consolidated Fund (Expenditure on Account) Bill 2022, involving an allocation of almost RM107.72 billion, was passed to cover part of the government service expenditure for 2023.

Anwar, when tabling the mini budget, announced that the government would give an additional RM100 to the annual salary increment of civil servants in Grade 11 to 56 and also a Special Financial Assistance of RM700 each to 1.3 million civil

servants, as well as RM350 each to one million government pensioners.

He added that the government has also agreed to give early schooling aid of RM150 to all students regardless of their parents' income levels, and an additional RM200 in monsoon season aid to smallholders in January, Bernama reported.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said the Bill was necessary as it gave temporary Parliamentary approval for the government to spend a portion of the national budget for government services during the months prior to the retabling and passing of the Supply Bill for 2023.

The Supply Bill, which was prepared by the previous government led by Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, has not been approved or debated in the Dewan Rakyat following the dissolution of Parliament on Oct 10.

The government service expenditure, among others, includes payments of emoluments for civil servants, utilities, scholarships, social welfare aid, education and health services.