

# 'GOVT TAKEOVER ATTEMPTS VIA SARAWAK WILL FAIL'

**Sarawak premier has rebuffed any bid to sway state from supporting federal govt, says PM**

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim believes any opposition attempts to engineer a “tebuk at-ap” (backdoor attempt) takeover of the government via Sarawak would fail.

He said this was due to the assurance from Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg that the state government would remain with the unity government until the next general election.

Anwar said during his meeting with Abang Johari on Friday, the

Sarawak premier shared how he had rebuffed attempts to sway Sarawak from supporting the federal government.

“He informed me of several desperate attempts by some quarters to influence him, but he has been consistently and firmly turning them down.

“He said he would not entertain any discussion on driving a wedge between the state and federal government.”

He said the firm stance of Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) and Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS) were critical, given the current political scenario.

Any backdoor attempts to install a new federal government, he said, would only have basis if Sabah and Sarawak opened up the opportunity.

“Abang Johari expressed his wish to close this episode altogether, which means that any such possibility (of a backdoor government) has been rendered void.”

He was speaking at a dialogue session with chief editors and se-



New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd group managing editor Datuk Ahmad Zaini Kamaruzzaman (standing, right) asking the prime minister whether Pakatan Harapan still viewed Umno as necessary in the 16th General Election, during the dialogue session yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

nior editors of the country's electronic, print and online media here yesterday.

New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd group managing editor Datuk Ahmad Zaini Kamaruzzaman asked Anwar whether Pakatan Harapan still viewed Umno as necessary in the 16th General Election given the perception that the latter was losing support among the Malays.

Anwar, who is PH chairman and PKR president, said Umno must engage with the grassroots

to explain issues affecting the party, especially on its relationship with DAP.

“It's not about hate for Umno, but among their own supporters there are claims that Umno has strayed from the path due to its cooperation with DAP.

“There is a strong anti-DAP sentiment among a segment of the Malays. Umno's problem is only that it is cooperating with DAP, which represents the majority of the Chinese.”

Anwar said relations between

parties in the unity government were very good.

“Given my age now, I'm nowhere near comfortable with any attempts to betray anyone. I am confident in their (Umno's) leadership, they have given solid support and we have a very good working relationship.

“I am certain that if Umno were to go to the ground, which they are doing now, things will recover.

“There are already signs of improvement.”