



People watching Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's interview on Al Jazeera. PIC BY EFFENDY RASHID

COMMITMENT TO REFORM

PM: UNITY GOVT AGREES COUNTRY MUST CHANGE

Governance, graft must be tackled or nation will go to the dogs, he warns in Al Jazeera interview

KUALA LUMPUR

PARTIES in the unity government agree that the country will go to the dogs if measures are not taken to ensure good governance and eliminate graft, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar, in an interview with international news broadcaster Al Jazeera that was aired on Thursday, was asked if his collaboration with Barisan Nasional and other parties that formed the unity government had made him compromise his policy pledges made during the 15th General Election in November.

"There are diverse political parties, yes.

"But what is essential is that all of them agree that this country will go to the dogs if we do not take measures to change now.

"Do they agree the central problem is the issue of good governance? Yes.

"Do they agree that corruption has been endemic in this country? Yes.



Party leaders at the Unity Government National Convention in Kuala Lumpur on May 14. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says the opposition will not be able to topple his administration due to the unity government's two-thirds majority, FILE PIC

"And then, of course, we adjust the policies," he said.

Anwar reiterated his commitment to reform the country's affirmative action policies to ensure equality.

"Unless there is a clear political commitment, a resolve to change, I don't believe Malaysia will survive," he said.

Anwar also affirmed that his government would not be toppled by the opposition before the next election citing the two-thirds majority his coalition had.

"They (the opposition) can put some pressure, but it will not affect the position of the government," he said.

Anwar, also recounted his 1998

beating by the then Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor, which had left him with a black eye and was adapted for use as the symbol of Parti Keadilan Nasional, today's Parti Keadilan Rakyat.

"That night I was badly assaulted. I was thinking of my parents, Azizah (Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail), and the family. And I thought because of the severity of the attack, I would not survive."

The interview also delved into the impact of Anwar's tumultuous journey to the top on his family and the personal toll it had taken, especially during his two prison terms.