

'Don't use racial sentiments'

PM: All rights will be protected, while the corrupt will pay their dues

SHAH ALAM: The current administration will never compromise on the principle that Malaysia is a country for all Malaysians irrespective of race or creed, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said Malay was the official language and Islam the official religion, and his administration would continue to maintain the privileges of the Malays and bumiputra as well as protect the sanctity of the Malay Rulers.

He also hit out at former leaders who had enriched their families and children when in power, but were now wringing their hands over "Malay survival".

"I will fight them and I will fight them hard. And this country belongs to all Malaysians.

"And if you challenge this, you challenge us and I will use all the authority at my disposal to stop this madness, this insanity of fighting against other races or other religions," he said.

He warned everyone not to play with the racial sentiment fire, as eventually, those who end up being burnt would be the people.

The Prime Minister did not mince his words, warning detractors and political foes to behave themselves.

In his typical rapid-fire style, the PKR president said he will use his power and authority to deal with those who created trouble for the nation and its people.

"You want to threaten me with a gathering? You want to threaten me for acting against corruption?

"You have chosen the wrong Prime Minister (to threaten). I will not be cowed by such threats. We have the power and we will use it.

"If you want to seize power, do try by all means, but it will not be that easy. We are prepared," said Anwar during PKR's Special National



Help is on the way: Anwar launching the Misi Banjir Khidmat Malaysia ke Johor programme at the PKR Congress in Shah Alam. - KK SHAM/The Star

Congress yesterday.

The PKR president also asked those lamenting that Malay interests were being eroded, what they had done for the community when they were in power.

"You held the power including the government for three years recently - where is the RUU355 (the amendments to the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965), where was the increase in funds to develop projects in Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis?" said Anwar while pointing out this year's Budget had increased funds for the development of these states.

The Prime Minister also took a moment to address the representatives of 41 foreign missions who were in attendance explaining to

them the reason behind his ire.

He told them he had been patient over the last four months after he assumed office and was guarded over what he said and how he spoke to maintain decorum as Prime Minister.

"But many of my foes have misread this as a sign of weakness.

"Many of the former corrupt leaders, who have amassed billions of ringgit in the past, when given the opportunity to lead, have squandered the wealth of the country," said Anwar.

He said the convention was an opportunity for him to speak as PKR president and as a reformist.

Anwar said his detractors had resorted to using racial sentiments after losing power and after being

investigated by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and Inland Revenue Department (LHDN).

"Patriotism', racism and religious bigotry combined are the last refuge of the scoundrel," he added.

He also asked if he was expected to allow individuals who had billions of ringgit at their disposal to not pay taxes and stash their cash overseas.

"I will collect taxes from the people but at the same time will not allow super-rich towkays to get away from paying taxes," he said.

He said that in the past, political power was used to protect "big criminals, big bribers and a select few to enable them to enrich themselves".