

'CONVENTION SHOWS GOVT IS STABLE'

Meeting also sends message that it will last until the next general election, says Anwar

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THE Unity Government National Convention 2023 has sent a clear signal that the unity government, formed with the support of 19 parties following the 15th General Election, remains solid.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim — making his return to Dewan Merdeka at the World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur 25 years later, this time as prime minister—yesterday said the signal of stability wasn't just for Malaysians, but also the world.

"Many claimed that the government wouldn't last three months. Some said it would dissolve after Chinese New Year, before Ramadan or Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

"However, the convention sends a clear message to Malaysia and the world that this government is not only stable, but also will last until the next general election.

"This government will also ensure that good governance among the administration will be continued and that corruption, as well as abuse of power, will be rid of for the people and country," he said in his address to almost 4,000 delegates.

The last time Anwar spoke at Dewan Merdeka was at the Umno general assembly in 1997, when he was the party's deputy president.

"Today, I'm here in high spirits and bursting with emotion because after 25 years, I'm giving a speech at Dewan Merdeka. Thank you for giving me the chance to come back here. Such is history."

Anwar paid tribute to his cabinet members, particularly Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, for their cooperation and commitment.

He said although Zahid had been attacked for agreeing to



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim interacting with the audience from the stage at the Unity Government National Convention 2023 in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

form the government with Pakatan Harapan, the cooperation would not have been possible without him.

"I know that Zahid was among those who was attacked the most.

"Were it not for his commitment as Umno president and the support of Umno members of parliament, history would be different. So we have to recognise his role and Umno's."

He also thanked Sarawak premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Openg as well as the mandate given by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong in the wake of GE15.

He said the unity government was committed to overcoming the damage of the past in forming a new Malaysia based on the principles of Madani.

He added that the country's power and wealth should be used to reshape it into a new regional economic giant.

This, he said, was possible as Malaysia had recorded a 5.6 per cent economic growth in the first quarter of 2023, among the region's best.

"Our labour market also increased in Q1 this year, steadied the inflation rate at 3.6 per cent, and we received much interest from international investors, such as the Amazon investment.

"This shows our speed of doing business as well as good governance, not just about giving commissions to family members and cronies."

He also touched on the Malaysia Agreement 1963, saying that it fell on current leaders to fulfil the promises of those before them.

"This is why I gave my assurance to the Sabah and Sarawak leadership. I have also given the full mandate to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof to resolve the issue and for the agreement to be fulfilled,"

He rejected claims that the assurance to resolve the issue was given to gain support from Gabungan Rakyat Sabah and Gabungan Parti Sarawak.

On another matter, he said he would meet Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Ahmad Yakob and Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor in two weeks to find a solution to the states' water crisis.

He said although it would require significant funds, loans, sukuk or bonds, it was a matter that needed to be addressed and should not burden the people.

He added that this had nothing to do with the state elections.

"That's secondary. The key issue is that after 60 years, people still do not have clean water to drink."

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim launching the Unity Government National Convention 2023 at Dewan Merdeka of World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur yesterday.