

# PM WANTS DEBATE ON AG'S REPORT

It must be scrutinised in Parliament with follow-up action, says Anwar

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**D**ATUK Seri Anwar Ibrahim wants the annual Auditor General's Report to be debated in Parliament and the accompanying recommendations to be given due attention.

The prime minister said the report should be scrutinised by

each ministry, government department and agency, and receive follow-up action.

"If this isn't done, then there would be no point in conducting an audit, we might as well throw it into the dustbin.

"Each criticism need not be final. If they (department, ministry or agency) have a response, then please do so.

"As such, as soon as the report is tabled by (Auditor General)

Datuk Wan Suraya Wan Mohd Radzi, everyone was required to study the report and provide a satisfactory response and follow-up action," he said.

He was speaking at a gathering with the National Audit Department's management and staff here yesterday.

Anwar said although the criticism contained in the AG's Report was directed to the unity government, it had to be acted upon as issues involving governance or conduct should not be taken lightly.

"This is to ensure that the report will be scrutinised by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Com-

mission, Inland Revenue Board, Finance Ministry and all enforcement bodies if the relevant agencies do not react accordingly to the National Audit Department's recommendations," he said.

Anwar said the National Audit Department's scope of powers would no longer be in the context of mere auditing, but would instead be expanded to cover an ombudsman framework.

However, he said this was still at a discussion stage.

"Given the department's satisfactory performance, I am now studying how we can strengthen and expand its jurisdiction.

"The expansion of the scope of

duties is being done to enable it to embody what is known as a *hisbah* (supervisory) institution or that of an ombudsman."

Anwar said the AG's Report is of paramount importance and was something he followed closely, even when he was the opposition leader.

"When I was a minister as well as when I was the opposition leader, I would pore through the reports in detail to offer criticism.

"What is regrettable is that even though these criticisms have been given over decades, it is almost the same and repetitive. We need to put an end to this," he said.