

NO-CONFIDENCE VOTE

# Take it to Parliament, Anwar tells detractors

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**GEORGE TOWN:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has reiterated that he will not step down from his post despite calls by the opposition.

"*Insyallah*, I will not step down. If I steal the people's money, then they can call for me to step down. But I did not do so.

"All government contracts go through open tender process," he said at the groundbreaking of Kompleks Madani Teluk Kumbar here yesterday.

Anwar said his detractors could use Parliament to criticise him.

"If they have enough numbers, they can bring a vote (of no confidence). That is the way.

"They can pull support from any member of parliament. If I lose, I will step down nicely. That is the peaceful manner."

Otherwise, he said, they should wait for the next general election.

"So, for now, let us preserve this peace and unity in our coun-



People watching a cultural performance at the national-level Unity Week celebration in Stadium Batu Kawan, George Town, yesterday. NSTP PIC BY MIKAIL ONG

try," he added, noting that many countries in this region were facing turbulence.

Earlier, at the national-level Unity Week celebration in Stadium Batu Kawan here, Anwar said the government would not prevent peaceful protests, but warned that efforts to incite hatred, particularly along racial or religious lines, would only deepen divisions and derail national progress.

On public demonstrations calling for his resignation, he said such actions were part of a functioning democracy, but stressed that political discourse must not descend into hostility and communal antagonism.

"If the people want to express their dissatisfaction through protests, that is their right. I will not stop them. But inciting hatred will only lead to anger among the people and no solutions to the problems faced.

"When those at the top incite hatred, those below are influenced by it, and tensions rise.

"When they are in power, they use their power to enrich themselves. When no longer in power, they will incite hatred. If we want the country to be peaceful and stable, we must live in harmony," he told a large crowd.

Present were Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow, National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang and Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek.

Anwar also said nation-building was a long and gradual process that could be destroyed easily.

"Who says we can't change the government? We can. Even Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Johari Abdul mentioned bringing a motion in Parliament to remove support for the prime minister.

"If there is enough support, the prime minister must resign. But

there is no support.

"If that is the case, then wait for the next election.

"No country in the world will be safe if we take an approach that incites hatred against one ethnic group.

"I need to remind everyone that this is a shared responsibility. If we want to save this country, we must protect the unity of our nation. This is our strength.

"Ask any world leader or people outside, what is great about Malaysia? The Malays and Islam are the majority, but if we don't take care of all the races, our country won't be safe," he said.

During the event, Anwar announced an additional RM10 million allocation for the National Unity Ministry, saying he was satisfied with its performance.

He also announced a RM5 million allocation for the southwest district for public infrastructure.