

# 'UP TO GRS TO DECIDE ON COOPERATION'

PM says it should be given space to choose, adding that political stability is top priority

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said it is up to Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS) to decide whether to work with Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Barisan Nasional (BN) in the coming Sabah election.

While expressing hope that they would cooperate, the PH chairman said GRS should be given space to decide.

"During the meeting where PH and BN formalised their cooperation for the state election, I said I would come to Tawau.

"That's why I'm here — to hold discussions with Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor and try to build a consensus between GRS, PH and BN.

"This is important because political stability at the national and state levels remains our top priority," he told a press conference after meeting PKR leaders at Tawau airport here yesterday.

Hajiji, who is also GRS chairman, said discussions were ongoing.

Last Friday, PH and BN jointly announced their collaboration for the 17th Sabah Election.

However, following the announcement, Hajiji said GRS would go it alone in the polls.

Hajiji had also said GRS was of



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, accompanied by Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor (fourth from left) and Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development Minister Datuk Ewon Benedick (fifth from right), with local award-winning entrepreneurs at the closing of the three-day Madani Rakyat programme at Dataran Majlis Perbandaran Tawau in Sabah yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

the view that Sabah-based parties should form the core of the state government, emphasising their deeper understanding of local realities, cultures and the needs of Sabahans.

But he also acknowledged the important role of national parties within the broader political landscape.

Meanwhile, Anwar cautioned politicians against using anti-federal sentiments for political mileage, saying such tactics did not benefit the people.

"Yes, the rhetoric might entertain the public. But in terms

of development and programmes, it will be like what happened when they had influence (power) — they didn't act in the interest of the people.

"We are different. I came here to listen to Sabah leaders and their priorities," he said.

On party elections in Sabah, Anwar, who is also PKR president, urged members to campaign with respect and integrity.

"Win or lose, I still have to embrace both sides. Don't repeat past mistakes where winners stayed loyal but losers betrayed the cause," he said.

Anwar also closed the three-day Madani rakyat programme at Dataran Majlis Perbandaran Tawau, as well as officiating at the handover ceremony of the Tamu Desa Sabah project.

He also presented the Sabah Entrepreneur Excellence Awards and launched the Madani Solar Programme here.

Earlier yesterday, in Kota Kinabalu, Bernama reported that Anwar did not discuss the dissolution of the Sabah Legislative Assembly during his meeting with Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Musa Aman.

He said the decision to dissolve the state assembly rested solely with Musa and Hajiji.

Anwar said the meeting focused primarily on Sabah's development and strengthening cooperation between the state and federal governments, such as in the oil and gas sector.

He also took input from state leaders to address key concerns and identify areas for improvement.

The meeting marked Anwar's first courtesy call on Musa since his appointment as Yang Dipertua Negeri.