

Parliament Opening Smooth, GE13 Issues Dominate First Week
Bernama
28 June, 2013

KUALA LUMPUR, (Bernama) -- The first week of the 13th Parliament went smoothly but the antics of some new and old MPs were among the eye-catching moments throughout week's sitting.

Most of the new MPs did not need long to adapt and they seemed eager to debate a number of issues including the 13th general election (GE13) and the sovereignty of the institution of the monarchy, which were among the topics that dominated and gingered up the Dewan Rakyat.

The first sitting of the First Term of the 13th Parliament began on Monday with the MPs sworn in and the selection of the Dewan Rakyat Speaker and his two deputies.

Although many parties were predicting that a fuss would occur following the opposition's proposal to boycott the swearing-in, this did not happen as all the 89 opposition's MPs took their oaths.

The composition of the Dewan rakyat after GE13 saw the Barisan Nasional (BN) dominating with 133 seats whereas the opposition pact 89 seats, the DAP with 38 seats, PKR (30) and PAS (21).

The first day of the sitting saw Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia re-elected as Dewan Rakyat Speaker while the Beluran MP Datuk Ronald Kiandee and Kuala Krau MP Datuk Ismail Said were elected as the Deputy Speakers.

The selection process however was slightly disturbed when some of the opposition's MPs questioned the method of letter voting that was conducted claiming that there was no confidentiality when they were required to signed the given ballot papers.

In fact, the matter later became the opposition's continous subject which linked the process with allegations on the Election Commission (EC), that the commision was not transparent in dealing handling GE13 on May 5.

Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Haminah Hamidon also attended the 13th Parliament on Tuesday. Tuanku Abdul Halim presented his Royal Address on various current issues.

Among them, Tuanku Abdul Halim reminded all parties to accept the GE13 results and asked the people to throw out characteristics that could bring disunity and also reminding the MPs to not to take any actions that could lead to the destruction of the country.

The address by the head of the country, however, evoked polemics in the Dewan Rakyat when the reaction of some opposition's MPs, including PKR advisor Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim questioning the royal command.

This was because, according to Anwar, the Royal Address could be debated, challenged and opposed in terms of the arguments because the facts were derived from the BN.

The statement was deemed by the government supporters as disrespectful of the Yang

di-Pertuan Agong, prompting several government MPs including Datuk Shamsul Anuar Nasarah (BN-Lenggong) and Datuk Bung Mohtar Radin (BN-Kinabatangan) to call for a special law to ensure the sovereignty of the monarchy institution would continue to be preserved.

"The institution of monarchy is a pillar that must be respected regardless of one's race, religion or political beliefs, it's an extension of inherited kingship with the concept of constitutional monarchy and through the system it has managed to put the country on a high place," said Shamsul Anuar.

"I call for a Treason Act to be formulated so that action can be taken against those who commit acts of treason against the Yang di-Pertuan Agong... let them be severely punished, including by imprisonment," Bung Mokhtar urged.

The sitting also heated up with GE13 issues raised by opposition MPs who claimed there was fraud in the handling of the GE13 and that it was the opposition who should have formed the government as they had won the popular vote as well.

Fed up with the claims, BN MPs including Tan Sri Annuar Musa (BN-Ketereh) reminded the opposition pact not to peddle the popular vote story because they competed according to their own party symbol, as compared to BN.

New faces such as Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir (BN-Kulim-Bandar Baharu) and Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican (BN-Kepala Batas) also voiced out and urged the opposition to accept their defeat and the reality of the GE13 results which gave the mandate to the BN to rule the country.

The invasion of Sulu terrorists in Sabah also attracted the MPs attention when some of the BN and opposition MPs urged the government to reveal the mastermind behind the intrusion which resulted the deaths of 10 members of the security forces.

They felt that by delaying the disclosure, it would continue to arouse suspicion among the public.

Apart from that, this week's sitting saw Anwar reappointed as the opposition leader in the Dewan Rakyat, while Tan Sri Shahrir Samad was chosen as the BN Backbenchers Club (BNBBC) chairman.

The Johor Baharu MP had led the BNBBC for the 11th Parliament term for two years before resigning in 2006.

--BERNAMA

Copyright © 2013 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v7/newsindex.php?id=959691>