

# Stop bickering, focus on nation's affairs - experts

KUALA LUMPUR: Five days have passed since the announcement of the new 28-member cabinet and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's ministerial appointments continue to draw positive and negative reactions.

The prime minister's decision to hold the finance portfolio and appoint Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi as deputy prime minister has triggered a debate as the latter is facing corruption charges in court while some quarters think it is improper for the prime minister to assume the finance minister's role.

Commenting on this, political analyst Prof Dr Azmi Hassan said it was not fair to question Anwar's moves in view of the circumstances surrounding the formation of the Cabinet.

## ACCEPT REALITY

"The (prevailing) situation requires An-

war to take into account the support of not only PH (Pakatan Harapan) component parties but also other partners (of the PH-led unity government) even though he has the right to appoint anyone deemed fit to help him govern the country," Azmi told Bernama.

He said Anwar had to examine several factors related to the cabinet appointments and "it was important for him to allocate the portfolios accordingly considering that it's an important basis of the cooperation among the various parties in ensuring political stability".

Azmi, who is also a geostrategist and senior fellow at the Nusantara Academy for Strategic Research, said all parties must accept the reality of the nation's administrative situation and stop complaining as the formation of the unity government was also in line with the Yang di-Pertu-

an Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah's aspirations.

He added that the country's political situation may have still been in turmoil if the unity government was not formed.

"I'm sure the people will appreciate this government as soon as the ministers start discharging their duties," he said.

## UNITY GOVERNMENT

Meanwhile, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia constitutional expert Associate Prof Dr Muhammad Fathi Yusof said although there was no unity government category in the Federal Constitution, its formation was legit as long as the prime minister had the support of the majority of the members of parliament.

"In the Constitution, the formation of a government is based on (which party or coalition gets) the ma-

ajority support of the Dewan Rakyat.

"A government can be rebranded should the need arise... in the context of political science, this (unity) government falls within the multiple-coalition government category as it involves various coalitions," he said.

He said by right, a unity government was formed when all the political coalitions in a nation come together to run the government without an opposition bloc.

"However, the unity government in our country refers to a government that can forge unity among the people and the various races as this is what our King wants," he said.

Commenting on criticisms concerning the new cabinet lineup, Muhammad Fathi said the appointments should not be linked to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as Article 40 of the Federal Constitution clearly states that the

King gives his consent based on the advice of the prime minister.

"According to Article 40, the prime minister has the power to appoint ministers. Hence, if there's any dispute over any appointment, no one should associate it (appointment) with the King," he said.

## CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Universiti Putra Malaysia Faculty of Human Ecology senior lecturer Associate Prof Dr Mohd Izani Mohd Zain said people must understand that the nation's political landscape had changed, hence they need to be more open-minded and accept the new cabinet.

This is not the time to question the formation of the unity government's cabinet, he said, adding that it was time for the coalitions (PH and Barisan Nasional) to find common ground in order for their administration to func-

tion well.

"Due to the dynamic nature of our nation's politics, we cannot afford to be too stereotyped.

"In fact, Anwar is seen to have done well by appointing the ministers based on the recommendations submitted by the parties (in the unity government).

"The appointments were also based on the party hierarchy, a move that made the selection of Cabinet members more stable," he said.

Mohd Izani also believed that it would not be easy to topple the current government as the prime minister has made it clear that he will lead the administration by closely adhering to the constitutional principles.

"It's obvious he doesn't want the people to have any doubt about the Cabinet and lose their trust in the government," he added.

- Bernama