

April 5, 1999

SECTION: National; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 573 words

HEADLINE: Keadilan launched at five-star hotel

DATELINE: Kuala Lumpur

BODY:

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The wife of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today launched Angkatan Keadilan Nasional at the five-star Renaissance Hotel and the party swiftly declared its intention to install Anwar as Prime Minister.

Anwar himself, described as the "inspiration behind Keadilan and who will continue to be a source of guidance", will, however, not become a member.

Instead, Keadilan's basic strategy as outlined to the Press, is for Anwar to woo Umno members and, ultimately, be Prime Minister, if an alternative coalition that he will try to put together comes into power after the general election.

If this materialises, and if Anwar is convicted by the High Court of a corruption charge on April 14, this proposed alternative coalition would seek a Royal pardon for Anwar after winning the general election which must be held by June next year.

The party, reviving the existing Ikatan Masyarakat Islam Malaysia registered in 1990, is headed by Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Ismail as president, and social activist Dr Chandra Muzaffar as deputy president. Friends and cronies of the former Deputy Prime Minister were also present at the launching.

Dr Wan Azizah said it had obtained approval from the Registrar of Societies for the name-change and to open membership to all Malaysians.

Explaining the strategy of Keadilan in the bigger political equation, Chandra said: "If he (Anwar) is not a member (of Keadilan), he will be able to play the role of bringing the different political parties together in a much more effective way.

"That, as far as we are concerned, is a major challenge facing all of us. The various groups which want change and justice in this country have to come together and establish a credible alternative.

"And the one person who can play this role is Anwar. Thus, Anwar will have to appeal to the ordinary members of Umno, too. Because unless and until the ordinary members of Umno are also part of this movement, you will not be able to bring about change in the country."

Asked whether Pas and DAP were agreeable to the plan to make Anwar Prime Minister, Chandra said: "We are merely expressing the wishes of Keadilan at this point in time. (But) if you look at the level of co-operation that exists among the political parties, I am sure we will be able to agree

on
the fundamentals."

Chandra said it was a little premature to ask a newly-launched party about seats.

The party's three vice presidents are Sheikh Azmi Ahmad, former Umno Supreme Council member Marina Yusoff who was also with Parti Melayu Semangat 46 and NGO activist Chua Tian Chang.

Former Abim leader Mohamed Annuar Tahir is party secretary-general.

Anwar's former political secretary Mohamad Ezam Mohamed Nor who read a message from Anwar at the launch, is its Youth leader while Nell Onn heads its Wanita wing. Former Negri Sembilan Umno Youth leader Ruslan Kassim is the party's information chief.

The party's 19 committee members are:

Dr Mohd Nor Nawawi, Dr Halili Rahmat, Ng Lum Yong, Tenaganita director Irene Fernandez, Goh Keat Peng, former Umno Youth assistant secretary Saifudin Nasution Ismail, Sahri Bahari, Dr Ismail Hamid,; and,

Johari Abdul, Dr Mansor Othman, Khalil Shah, Anwar's lawyer Zainur Zakaria, Mohamad Rafaie Malek, Omar Jaafar, former Johor S46 deputy chief Kahar Ahmad, Dr Abdul Hamid Ahmad Suhaime, Nik Aziz Nik Hassan and Yusuf Abdul Rahman.

GRAPHIC: Picture - Here's our political party ... Dr Wan Azizah pressing a button to mark the official launch of the Parti Keadilan in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. With her is Anuar Tahir, the party's secretary-general.

LOAD-DATE: April 23, 1999