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Anwar-Umno

DIRECTIVE WILL NOT AFFECT GOVT ADMINISTRATION, SAY ANWAR

PETALING JAYA, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today the directive to cabinet ministers and government servants from Umno not to attend functions that can be misconstrued as campaigning will not affect the government administration.

He said they could carry out their normal duties and should only avoid doubtful functions.

"If they are not sure, they are not smart enough in the sense that they are not too sure, they can check with us, the safe thing is not to do it," he told reporters after opening the new Nanyang Siang Pau building, here.

He was asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Ser Dr Mahathir Mohamad's directive on the matter last night. Dr Mahathir had asked those concerned to refer to the special committee chaired by him if they were still in doubt.

The committee, comprising Dr Mahathir, Anwar, secretary-general Datuk Mohamed Rahmat and several Umno veterans, was set up to look into complaints against candidates contesting for the vice-presidencies and the Youth and Wanita leaders' posts in next month's party elections.

Asked whether the establishment of the special committee meant that the party's disciplinary committee chaired by Anwar was ineffective, Anwar, who is also Umno deputy president, said it did not.

He said the establishment of the special committee was proposed by the disciplinary committee to avoid allegations of unfairness in its decisions on charges brought against candidates as its members were also candidates.

"Hence, I suggested to Dr Mahathir that the president chair the special committee with me, the secretary-general and several others as members for this special purpose only. The disciplinary committee will carry out its duties as usual," he said.

Anwar said the Umno veterans to sit on the special committee had not been identified.

He also said that all complaints that were signed or contained facts on alleged misconduct of members were referred to the disciplinary and none was thrown away.

Anwar said the suspension of five members, including a state assemblyman, by the supreme council showed that the party was serious about the matter. -- BERNAMA

AFY JK