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Anwar-Umno

NO FURTHER ACTION AGAINST UMNO CANDIDATES BARRED FROM POLLS

PETALING JAYA, Oct 17 (Bernama) -- No further action will be taken against the eight Umno members who were disqualified from the Oct 9-10 party elections, Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

Anwar, who is the Deputy Prime Minister, said the position of seven of them who hold party or government posts would also not be affected.

"(When the decision to drop them was made) we only referred to their qualification to contest after the president (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) obtained information from reliable sources.

"But their disqualification should not be interpreted as an offence which can adversely affect their position in the government or party," he told reporters after opening a new facility at the Western Digital (M) Sdn Bhd plant here.

On Oct 7, Anwar, in his capacity as chairman of the Umno management and disciplinary committees, announced the disqualification of six candidates for the party's Supreme Council election and another two for the Youth wing for breaching party regulations.

Those barred from contesting in the Supreme Council polls were Pulau Pinang Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Mohd Shariff Omar, four state executive councillors

-- Datuk Latif Mirasa (Pulau Pinang), Datuk Dr Abdul Malek Hanafiah (Perak), Datuk Mohd Aini Taib (Selangor) and Adam Abdul Hamid (Johor) -- and Shah Alam MP Datuk Salamon Salamat.

The two disqualified from the Youth Exco election were Johor executive councillor Dr Latif Ahmad and Ampang Jaya Umno Youth divisional head Ayub Mat Aris.

Adam also lost his status as a delegate to the Umno General Assembly while Dr Latif and Ayub were disqualified as delegates to the Youth assembly.

After the assembly, questions arose regarding their positions in the government and party with several state governments saying they would leave the decision to the national leadership.

Anwar said he discussed the matter with Dr Mahathir yesterday and the Prime Minister asked him to make the clarification.

"Dr Mahathir reiterated that the decision to drop the candidates was not meant to stop them from being active in politics or the government since they had not been given the chance to know the specific charges and make specific replies. They have submitted general replies," he said.

Anwar said that when the Umno special committee headed by Dr Mahathir made the decision to drop the candidates, the situation was very pressing as the General Assembly was then only two days away.

"As the decision we made was an emergency decision, we did not give them the chance to explain," he said.

However, he said, the affected members have since replied to the charges.

They would be asked to give further explanations if necessary, he added. -- BERNAMA

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