

26 MAR 1996

Anwar-Umno

VIEWS SHOULD BE PRESENTED THROUGH PROPER CHANNEL, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, March 26 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today state assemblymen could express their views as to who they want to be the Menteri Besar but it must be done through the proper channel.

"The elected representatives are expressing their views. It would be unreasonable for me if I say they cannot do so. But, they should use the proper channel," he said when asked to comment on the action of 22 Kedah assemblymen in making public their memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and asking him to retain Tan Sri Osman Aroff as the Menteri Besar.

They also objected to any attempt to appoint former Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, who is Kuah assemblyman, as Kedah Menteri Besar to succeed Osman.

Dr Mahathir had expressed his views on the matter yesterday, saying that the assemblymen should have followed Umno's tradition by discussing the matter with him first before making it public.

Asked on action to be taken against the assemblymen, Anwar said he would study their views before making further comment.

On whether the action of the assemblymen was proper, Anwar who is also Umno Deputy President and Disciplinary Committee Chairman said they had their respective roles and rights.

"Only in this issue, the question of making public the decision, has never been the party's tradition," he said.

But, he said Umno could not just brush aside the firm views expressed by several assemblymen in the memorandum.

As whether it was a healthy development in Umno, he said: "I feel, it should not have reached to such extent as they are still party members, observing party's discipline and regulations. I don't feel there is not much problem. They want to express their views and we should hear them."

Anwar said the question on whether they had breached party's discipline did not arise as yet.

He said he discussed the issue with Dr Mahathir yesterday and they would talk about it again when the Prime Minister returned from his official visit to New Zealand.

"We received the memorandum and I feel it would have been better if the memorandum was sent unannounced. But, again, maybe they want to make known their views and intentions," he said.

Anwar believed the matter would be raised at the monthly meeting of the Supreme Council early next month, while expressing hope it would be resolved amicably.

"I think it will be raised at the meeting. I have discussed the matter with the Prime Minister yesterday. There are several things which I have to do and I will report to him," he added. --Bernama

AFY ABG