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Anwar-premiership

EXTRA WORK LOAD EXPECTED AS ACTING PREMIER, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, July 15 (Bernama) -- The extra work-load, four times over to be exact, is inevitable and expected: that is how Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim looks at his two-month-long acting prime ministership so far.

This is understandable as Anwar has to do four jobs simultaneously -- that of the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

"Extra load of course. I have been doing it for some years now, from time to time... but now the duration is slightly longer and the load is slightly more," said Anwar.

He was approached by newsmen for his perception of his tenure as acting premier this time around after opening the Second International Islamic Capital Market Conference here today.

Anwar summed up how he perceived the job thus: "I have been covering jobs some times... from time to time and I consult PM all the times. What else do you like to see?"

The acting prime ministership also meant an enlarged job list for Anwar who has to act as Umno president besides being deputy party president.

Anwar was appointed Acting Prime Minister on May 19 when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad left for two months leave abroad, his first long leave after 16 years in office.

Even during his leave Dr Mahathir made official visits to several European countries, especially to promote Malaysia's Multimedia Supercorridor (MSC), a 750 sq km zone south of here devoted to multimedia products and services.

Asked on the biggest single issue he had to deal with during the acting premiership, Anwar snapped in lighter vein: "The media."

As Acting Prime Minister, Anwar made a few key decisions including the appointment of Datuk Abu Zahar Isnin as new Melaka chief minister.

Anwar also promoted former Deputy Home Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob to be the new Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister.

Megat Junid succeeded Datuk Abu Hassan Omar who resigned and subsequently became new Selangor Menteri Besar upon winning the Permatang state by-election.

As acting Umno president Anwar chaired two Supreme Council meetings which most importantly decided to expel former Wanita Umno Treasurer Siti Zainab Abu Bakar as Primary Industries deputy minister for wrongful transfer of RM1.8 million from the movement's fund. -- BERNAMA

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