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Anwar-Saleh

SALEH SULONG CAPABLE OF RUNNING DRB-HICOM, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, March 8 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today expressed confidence in the new chairman of DRB-Hicom group, saying that Datuk Saleh Sulong is capable of satisfactorily managing the companies under his charge.

He said there would be no change in equities held by the government in the companies headed by Saleh.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said Saleh's close association with the late Tan Sri Yahaya Ahmad as well as his experience would enable him to successfully manage companies under the group.

"I feel, he can manage (DRB-Hicom) satisfactorily," he told reporters after paying a courtesy call on South African President Nelson Mandela, here.

Saleh was appointed last Thursday to succeed Yahaya who was killed in a helicopter crash near Kuala Lipis, Pahang last Monday.

In additions, Saleh was also appointed chairman of Gadek (Malaysia) Berhad, Gadek Capital Bhd, Kedah Cement Holdings Bhd Edaran Otomobil Nasional Bhd (EON) and Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton).

On the government's equities held by companies through the Minister of Finance Incorporated such as Hicom Holdings Berhad, Anwar said the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had told Saleh during their meeting that there would NOT (rpt) NOT be any change in the existing structure.

Last Thursday, Saleh told a news conference that Dr Mahathir had recommended him as chairman and president for the special shareholder, namely the government, in Hicom.

The Minister of Finance Incorporated holds the golden share in Hicom, giving the government voting right to decide in case of a deadlock in reaching a decision involving the company.

Saleh was also reported to have said that Dr Mahathir agreed to his appointment as chairman of DRB group and other companies headed by the late Yahya.

Anwar also said he had explained to Saleh that the government would continue to provide support needed to ensure the success of companies concerned.

Since the government has a stake in Hicom, Anwar said it would provide and determine the assistance required by the company.

"For other companies in which we should help, we will help," he said.

Anwar also said he and Saleh had determined matters deserving priority in the management of companies concerned.

Saleh, who has an indirect stake in DRB, mainly through Gemilang Nominees Sdn Berhad, has been Yahaya's close associate for 18 years.

Yahya, who had started the Master Carriage group with Saleh and a few trusted aides, had stakes in 14 listed companies, 12 on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange and two in Singapore. The effective stake in these companies stood at about RM5.8 billion.

On his discussion with Mandela, Anwar said it was a follow-up of the discussion between the South African President and Dr Mahathir yesterday.

-- BERNAMA

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