

Anwar: Release from ISA detention a gimmick

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said his release from ISA detention was a "gimmick" by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad because of the Prime Minister's fear of the people's wrath and the reaction of the international community.

"The plan was to get me out of ISA detention before Apec begins," Anwar who is in jail pending his court case, claimed in a statement conveyed by his wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail at their home yesterday.

Anwar alleged that the treatment given to ISA detainees, including placing them under solitary confinement and forcing detainees to issue conciliatory statements as conditions for release, was inhumane.

He objected to the Oct 15 pho-

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tograph of him in a local Malay daily which gave the impression that he was having a sumptuous meal, saying it was the first decent meal served to him at Bukit Aman.

However, he said he did not deny the friendly attitude of most police personnel in their treatment of him.

Anwar said he was aware of the fear and reluctance of many in the leadership to express their views so as to protect their vested interests.

"But they must take heed of the wishes of the rakyat before it is too late," he said.

Earlier, Dr Wan Azizah told a press conference that she and her children met Anwar in the Sungai Buloh prison yesterday for half an hour.