

# Anwar's dismissal was gazetted, says PM

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DAFUK Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad explained that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's dismissal as deputy prime minister and finance minister was gazetted under the Functions of Ministers Act 1959 and the Federal Government Ministers Order 1998.

Dr Mahathir, also First Finance Minister, said the gazette came into effect after receiving the consent of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong on Sept 5 and signed by the Chief Secretary to the Government.

Anwar was sacked from his government posts on Sept 2, and from Umno the next day.

Speaking to reporters in Parliament lobby, the Prime Minister said that before he could table the 1999 Budget, DAP deputy chairman Karpal Singh had accused him of not being appointed legitimately (as finance minister) as it was ungazetted.

"There is clearly a gazette," he added.

Dr Mahathir also refuted Karpal Singh's contention that only a finance minister could table the Budget.

"The Budget speech can be delivered by any minister, not necessarily the finance minister. As such, Karpal Singh's contention that I have no right is without basis.

"Any minister can do it.

I can do it too. Furthermore, I have already been announced as the finance minister," he said.

Asked about Karpal Singh's intention in raising the matter, Dr Mahathir said: "He just wants to create trouble. He does not understand the law. Any minister can table the Budget but Karpal Singh does not seem to know the Standing Orders."

The Prime Minister said that Karpal Singh was probably trying to take advantage of the live telecast of the tabling of the Budget to show that the Government conducted its affairs allegedly without observing procedures.

During the Dewan Rakyat proceedings earlier, Karpal Singh, who is Jelutong MP, "challenged" Dr Mahathir's eligibility to table the Budget.

Standing up on a point of order, Karpal Singh said that only the "valid" finance minister could table the Supply Bill and that, to him, the two present finance ministers were not valid.

(Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed is also Second Finance Minister.)

"The valid finance minister is the Permatang Pauh MP (Anwar)," Karpal Singh said at the start of the sitting before Dr

Mahathir tabled the Budget for second reading.

The DAP MP told the House that Anwar had not resigned from his post and demanded that Dr Mahathir inform the Dewan on whether Anwar's appointment had been revoked by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong on the Prime Minister's advice.

Amid protests from Barisan MPs, Karpal Singh went on, saying his point was supported by Article 43(5) of the Federal Constitution which stipulated that a minister's appointment must also be revoked by the King.

Dr Mahathir replied that he had notified the King of his decision to sack Anwar as deputy prime minister and finance minister but Karpal Singh insisted on wanting to know whether Anwar's appointment had been revoked.

Dr Mahathir again replied that he had presented his decision to the King "and whether or not it can be seen as an advice, it's up to Yang Berhormat."

Despite further protests by Karpal who asked whether the matter was gazetted, Speaker Tun Zahir Ismail ordered for the proceedings to continue, adding: "That's enough. Whether or not it is gazetted would not have an effect on its legality."