

Dr M: leaders advised 'me' to sack Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said state leaders urged him to sack Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at once when he consulted them.

"It was their unanimous view... Their fear was that if anything happened to me, he (Anwar) would succeed me as prime minister.

"So they said; 'there's no way we can wait. You have to remove him now,'" Dr Mahathir said during a question-and-answer session with participants of the Commonwealth Press Union biennial conference after opening it yesterday.

He said following Anwar's sacking from the Cabinet, the Umno supreme council had listened to both sides of the story and had unanimously decided that he be expelled from the party too.

"All these things were done in the most-proper manner possible.

"In other cases, we have been even more ca-

sual but those who were sacked then did not question the decision," he added.

Dr Mahathir noted that when Anwar was chairman of Umno's disciplinary and management committee, those who were expelled from the party had accepted the decision.

"He (Anwar) should accept (his sacking) as much as the others who have accepted (theirs)," he said.

The Prime Minister said while demonstrations brought down President Suharto in Indonesia, the same would not happen to the Malaysian Government.

"We are elected members of Government and we cannot be brought down by demonstrations in the streets," he said, adding that rioting was not part of the country's legal system.

"Demonstrators cannot make a decision for us nor can anybody be judged by street demonstrations," he said.