

Anwar: Rally behind PM

By WAN HAMIDIHAMID

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians must rally behind Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to maintain political stability which was a prerequisite for economic recovery, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the support for Dr Mahathir was important to enable the Government embark on recovery programmes.

"Economic recovery will take some time, but if we are united to fight against any effort to topple the country's leadership and to reject attempts to create disharmony among the races, the economy will recover.

"I believe in the resilience of our people. The Asian resilience can ensure the economy be revived within a short period. We must have confidence," he said during a dialogue session with students at a meeting organised by the United Kingdom Executive Council for Malaysian Stu-

dents here yesterday.

In his keynote address, Anwar who is Finance Minister said the economy could be maintained as Malaysia had political stability and harmonious relationships among the people of various races in the country.

However, he warned that there might be some who wanted to create trouble by taking advantage of the economic downturn.

He said Malaysians must reject such people especially those who say "the economic downturn is the right time to act, so we can eliminate some people."

"I also realise that whatever I may say, if a person is good, he will accept it wholeheartedly. But if a person is bad, (even if I say good things) he may say 'sure he said it but he did not mean it that way'.

"Such a person is a real conman," said Anwar who is also Umno deputy president.

He said plans and programmes for

economic recovery must be based on Malaysia's own agenda and no foreigner should be allowed to dictate terms to the country.

"Of course I discuss our problems with foreigners at many forums including those at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

"But at the end of the day, we are responsible to ensure our economic policy is the policy wanted by our people," he said.

During the dialogue, Anwar who was asked about Malaysia-Singapore relations, said Malaysians should not worry as the issue was being handled by the Government.

He also appreciated the support by all Malaysians, including opposition parties, for Dr Mahathir and the Government in handling the matter.

He added that Malaysia had informed Singapore that it should adopt a wiser attitude by respecting the feelings and sensitivity of Malaysians.

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