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Focus-Gore

AL GORE CONFIRMS SUSPICIONS OF FOREIGN "DALANG" IN MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR: It is now quite clear that the demonstrations staged by sacked Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's supporters demanding reforms is orchestrated by western powers, ostensibly the United States.

This is evidenced by US Vice-President Al Gore's open call for the illegal rallies when he publicly goaded the several hundreds of protesters for more street protests by saluting them as the "brave people of Malaysia" striving for democracy and human rights.

In backing the so-called "reformasi" protests of Anwar's supporters at a dinner of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in Kuala Lumpur last Monday, Gore seemed indifferent to the bloody riots in Indonesia, much less the loss of lives, rape, looting, arson and lawlessness in that country.

But more than a display of his (and the White House's) ignorance of Malaysian culture and values, his blatant call for violence has only served to confirm the suspicions that those involved in the "reformasi" movement are being used as instruments by the US to topple Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, whatever the price to peace and harmony in the country.

Among those who see the "foreign hands" in the Chow Kit and Kampung Baru "wayang" is Terengganu Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Wan Mokhtar Ahmad. In an interview with Bernama two weeks prior to the arrival of Al Gore, Wan Mokhtar said the backing for Anwar by a number of world leaders, especially those from the West, was not born out of sincerity in the name of upholding justice and human rights.

"I think Anwar and his followers have been snared if they assumed that the support by the West is genuine. Actually, the West will love to see the downfall of Dr Mahathir, and be replaced with their own stooge who could fit their agenda," he observed.

Dr Mahathir sacked Anwar as the Deputy Prime Minister on September 2 while the Umno Supreme Council expelled him as the Deputy President and a party member a day later.

Anwar is currently facing charges of corruption and sexual misconduct in a Kuala Lumpur High Court.

According to Wan Mokhtar, the West harboured so much hatred for Dr Mahathir because of his blunt remarks on equality and rights for poor countries often oppressed by superpowers.

The West was also envious, and feared, Dr Mahathir's vision, notably Vision 2020 (to transform Malaysia into a developed nation in the new millennium), and the efficiency of his administration which had helped in the rapid development of the country.

"To the West, this success is a threat, particularly of their control of the world market and their influence," he said.

"Dr Mahathir is noted for his bluntness...calling a spade a spade. He does not like to conceal...the West is uneasy with that," he said.

Wan Mokhtar, who is the Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers Council chairman, said to the West, Dr Mahathir was like a thorn in their flesh when he initiated policies aimed at abolishing restrictions, procedures and controls imposed by the West on developing nations.

Notable among them is the "prosper thy neighbour" policy which recognises that as long the shackles of poverty existed, peace would not be

realised in this region.

The US, said Wan Mokhtar, was uncomfortable with this concept as were a few neighbouring countries, which had long looked to the West for direction.

"The West views the sacking of Anwar as the best opportunity to hit back at Dr Mahathir and to spark off anarchy, pushing for a change in the leadership of the country. They are taking advantage of the crisis, counting on installing a puppet administration in Malaysia," Wan Mokhtar said.

He regretted that Anwar's supporters did not realise this, and were dancing to the tune of the West.

He was also disappointed with the Malaysian representatives abroad who failed to take pains to explain the chronology of events which led to Dr Mahathir sacking his deputy and the events which followed.

"Information attaches in Malaysian embassies should double their efforts in explaining to their foreign peers the actual situation so that they are not totally taken in by false reports fed by certain quarters to the media, including the Internet," he said.

Domestically, he felt that the Umno Information Bureau should be more pro-active in explaining to the people the appropriateness of the top leadership's action against Anwar and the importance of safeguarding unity and peace.

He said the bureau should set up an operations room, specially to monitor developments on the issue and to intercept lies hurled by certain circles towards the leadership of the party and government. -- Bernama

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