

18 SEP 1998

Mahathir-Anwar

ANWAR ONLY CARES ABOUT HIMSELF, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

LANGKAWI, Sept 18 (Bernama) -- Former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's association with the opposition DAP shows that he only cares about himself, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today.

He said Anwar was even willing to associate himself with the opposition party when he no longer enjoyed Umno's support.

Umno members who were loyal to the party would leave the former Umno deputy president because he had aligned himself with the DAP, he told a news conference after visiting the Langkawi international shooting range (Lisram), here.

Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno president, said they would be even more disappointed by Anwar's action and eventually would not follow him.

Anwar's association with the DAP "shows where his loyalty lies," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar's association with the DAP and not Pas was the worse of all as the DAP was one party which Umno could never accept.

"If he's an Umno man, he would not join the opposition party," he said.

On the big turnout at Anwar's ceramah, he said people came probably out of curiosity or they were confused.

"When they discover the truth, they will act according to what is true," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he did not see any chances of Anwar rejoining Umno by his actions of trying to rally support through demonstrations as "Umno does not rely on demonstration to get support."

On his plan to retire, he said he did not tell his former deputy about it.

"This decision I made myself and promised myself," he said.

On the post of Umno disciplinary committee chairman, made vacant following the dismissal of Anwar, he said the two vice-presidents Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak could act as joint-chairmen.

Dr Mahathir said he could not appoint either one of them for fear of giving one person an advantage over the other as that person would be deemed to have his support.

He said the decision reached by the disciplinary committee would be referred to the Supreme Council which would give a final say in the matter and this would also be the council's decision.

-- BERNAMA

AHM ABG