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Anwar reiterates his loyalty to Dr M

k Suat Ling; Azrani Rustam; Shahrum Sayuti

DEPUTY Umno president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday reiterated his support and loyalty to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad saying that party and national unity was of paramount importance and not personal agenda or factions.

He said Umno should not allow any attempt to split and destroy the party's unity.

He said Umno members should support the Prime Minister not only at the time when the economy was strong and good but also at a time when the economy was bad.

He said Umno members should send out a clear message to the opposition that they would remain united and stand steadfastly behind Dr Mahathir.

Dispelling rumours of his rift with the party president, Anwar said he never had any intention of questioning the integrity of the party leader.

"But does this mean that I do not have any freedom?," he asked when winding up the debate at the end of the three-day Umno general assembly.

He said his speeches and statements were often misinterpreted especially by the foreign media as contradictory to that of the Prime Minister.

He said they might be saying things in different tones but in principle, they were similar.

Anwar also told the assembly of an attempt by an editor of a foreign magazine to put him at loggerheads with the Prime Minister by asking him a "naughty" question on why he did not challenge Dr Mahathir.

Anwar said he was careful so as not to fall into the trap and told the editor that Dr Mahathir was his leader and he had pledged his loyalty to him.

And to show his undivided support and loyalty to Dr Mahathir, Anwar read out a "pantun" which reads:

Anak Melaka menjerat merbah,
Jerat dipasang di tengah kebun,
Setia saya tak pernah berubah,
Hanya orang menabur racun.

This was followed by another which warns against any attempt to undermine his loyalty and support to Dr Mahathir:

Ada saudagar pergi ke kebun,
Singgah di kedai membeli sayur,
Baik-baik menabur racun,
Salah silap tertelan sendiri.

(END)