

06 SEP 1998

Mustapa-Anwar

ANWAR SACKED FOR SUSPICIONS ON PERSONAL AND MORAL CONDUCT - MUSTAPA

KOTA BAHARU, Sept 6 (Bernama) -- Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was sacked from the government and Umno due to suspicions on his personal and moral conduct.

He said his dismissal was not due to differences over policies of the country or a political conspiracy to oust him.

"As a leader with Islamic education and considered a champion of Islam, we cannot defend him when his personal and moral conduct is suspect," he told reporters at the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport in Pengkalan Chepa, near here, today.

"The Umno Supreme Council members feel enough doubts had been created over Anwar to warrant the action that has been instituted against him," said Mustapa, who is also a Supreme Council member.

He said Prime Minister and Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad explained the reasons for Anwar's removal to divisional, youth and wanita leaders from Kelantan in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

He said Anwar's questionable personal and moral conduct had breached several provisions of Umno's constitution and hence, the Supreme Council, being the party's highest decision-making body, had made the appropriate decision.

"The decision should not be disputed by anyone," he said.

Mustapa also said the police and the Attorney-General had discharged their duties professionally without being influenced by anyone.

Their investigations had aroused suspicions on Anwar's personal and moral conduct, he said.

"It is unfortunate that the country's legal system is being questioned. It is difficult for the people to believe the system had been influenced by certain parties," he said.

Asked whether Anwar's dismissal would favour the opposition parties including PAS, he said, "if we protect a leader having personal problems, it will weaken the party."

Mustapa said opposition parties would take the opportunity to attack Umno if it protected a leader with personal problems.

He said it was difficult for Umno or opposition parties to accept a leader with questionable personal qualities.

He said party members in Kelantan would be briefed on Anwar's removal as some of them had yet to understand the actual reasons for his expulsion.

-- BERNAMA

BD TS