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Mahathir-Topple

ANWAR WAS SCHEMING TOWARDS TOPPLING ME- DR MAHATHIR

JITRA, Kedah, Oct 2 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that his former deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was working towards toppling him as Prime Minister of Malaysia and Umno president.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar while being in Umno and the government was in fact scheming towards toppling him.

"He appeared to be very good to me but he was actually planning ways of bringing me down. At first I did not believe when people told me about this but I now know this to be true," he told reporters after addressing a gathering at the Dewan Jitra here.

The Prime Minister said Anwar had arranged for his supporters to contest and get control of the various Umno divisions in the country so that he could win the party's top post in next year's Umno elections.

Another measure which Anwar took was to keep materials overseas to incriminate other leaders and so expose their alleged wrong doings.

When he contested in the party elections next year, he hoped to produce these materials to bring down the leader, Dr Mahathir said.

He said it was clear that Anwar had planned this.

"This is the real conspiracy," he said.

On Anwar's statement at the opening of the Pulau Pinang Umno building in August that he would not oppose Dr Mahathir as he considered him as his teacher, the Prime Minister said his former deputy was not sincere.

"I feel he will say that he won't contest the Umno president's post and will reject any nominations for the post.

"But what he has declared is that (only) the Pulau Pinang Umno liaison committee will not nominate him for the post. Other divisions can still make the nomination," said Dr Mahathir.

He said he had been told that the Pulau Pinang liaison committee had never made such a decision.

"Anwar is lying. The committee did not make that decision as (Umno vice-president Datuk Seri) Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and others in the committee should know," he said.

Asked if at this year's Umno general assembly he had detected signs that he would be toppled, Dr Mahathir said he had heard about it but did not take it seriously.

He said he also heard that his speech at the assembly was to have been greeted with "boos", but as it turned out it was well received by the delegates.

Asked if he had succeeded in foiling the attempt to topple him, the Prime Minister said he was not sure about that but his explanation at the general assembly was accepted by the delegates.

As to whether he regretted bringing Anwar into the party and government, Dr Mahathir said he did not, but what he regretted was Anwar's conduct.

On the calls from many groups and individuals for the setting up of an independent body to investigate Anwar's claim that he was assaulted by police while under detention, Dr Mahathir, who is also the Home Minister, said the police themselves could carry out the probe independently and professionally.

"It's not certain that an independent body will be independent as they may decide to take Anwar's side," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said Western countries had described the Malaysian

government as dicatatorial following the recent developments.

He alleged that Anwar was liked in the West because the former Deputy Prime Minister was pro-West and did whatever the West wanted including suppressing the country's economy.

"We are not willing to be colonised by the West although Anwar is prepared to give in to them," he said.

The Prime Minister also alleged that Anwar instigated his supporters to create chaos so that the hearing of his cases could not go on while riots take place outside the court.

--BERNAMA

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