

12 AUG 1998

Khalil-Statement

ANWAR'S STATEMENT CLEARS THE AIR, SAYS KHALIL

KUANTAN, Aug 12 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's statement that all party divisions in Pulau Pinang will nominate Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the Umno president's post in next year's party election is hoped to clear the air over many issues.

Pahang Umno liasion committee chairman Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said this to reporters after launching the state-level book contribution campaign, here, today.

He said Pahang Umno welcomed Anwar's announcement and hoped there should be no more doubts, discussions or polemics on the contest for the top party post.

Yesterday, Anwar who is the Umno deputy president and Pulau Pinang Umno liasion committee chairman, said his statement should kill off any rumours that he would challenge Dr Mahathir for the top post.

In KOTA KINABALU, Sabah Umno liasion committee chairman Datuk Osu Sukam welcomed the statement saying that it would end speculations on the possibility of Anwar challenging Dr Mahathir.

"We welcomed his (Anwar) stand and we know that he has no intention of contesting the Umno president's post," Osu said after attending a function to fly the national flag, here.

Osu, who is Sabah Deputy Chief Minister, said Sabah Umno fully supported the "no contest" stand for the party top post.

"If there is any contest, Sabah Umno will support the incumbent," he added.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad said the Terengganu Umno gave its full support to Dr Mahathir and would nominate the Umno president for the top party post.

Wan Mokhtar who is also the Terengganu Umno liasion committee chairman said the support was also based on Dr Mahathir's integrity in various issues at the national and international stage.

He said Anwar's statement was a slap to those who liked to listen to rumours.

Meanwhile, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said all 20 Umno divisions in the state would provide their solid support for Dr Mahathir's nomination as Umno president in the party election next year.

Speaking to reporters after visiting the Terengganu Family Development Foundation, Abdul Ghani said Anwar's statement was in line with the stand taken by Johor Umno that there should be no splits in the party leadership.

Abdul Ghani who is also the Johor Umno liasion committee chairman said the state Umno was never bothered by rumours which attempted to pit Umno leaders against each other since they know that it was false.

"It is created to destabilise the nation's political stability and cause unrest among the people," he said.

In MELAKA, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Abu Zahar Isnin said the state Umno would pass a motion declaring support for Dr Mahathir as the party president.

Abu Zahar who is the Melaka Umno liasion committee chairman said the committee would convene a meeting tonight to adopt a resolution on this.

He said the five Umno divisions in the state would nominate Dr Mahathir and Anwar for the party president's and deputy-president's post for next year's Umno election.

In PORT DICKSON, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamed Isa Abdul Samad said

Anwar's statement should once and for all clear the air and bury rumours claiming the Umno deputy president going for the top party post.

The statement made before Dr Mahathir and thousands of people in Pulau Pinang last night should be enough to stop all rumours on it even though Anwar had made known of his stand several times before, Mohamed Isa said.

He said this after closing the Syariah Court Judges and Registrars Conference.

Anwar made the announcement at the function to officiate "Menara Umno" in Pulau Pinang by Dr Mahathir last night.

-- BERNAMA

Team ZUL RM