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Bagan, Tanjung divisions back Dr M as president

PENANG, Wed. - The Bagan and Tanjung Umno divisions, together with their Youth and Wanita wings, today declared their support for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as Prime Minister and party president.

The Bagan division, however, appealed to Dr Mahathir to reconsider his decision to sack Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as Deputy Prime Minister.

It also asked that the Umno supreme council's decision to expel him from the party be rescinded.

The Bagan division was one of two divisions in the State which did not send any representative to the special State Umno liaison committee meeting convened on Sunday to discuss the expulsion of Anwar.

The other was the Bukit Bendera division.

At that meeting, the State Umno decided to back Dr Mahathir and the supreme council over the decision to sack Anwar.

In a Press statement issued today, Bagan division secretary Abdul Latif Majid said an appeal had been sent to Dr Mahathir urging that Anwar be reinstated as an Umno member and all his former posts.

The division, he said, based its appeal on the grounds that Dr Mahathir himself had said that a person could not be found guilty or have action taken against him until proven guilty by the courts.

Abdul Latif said the Bagan division and its Youth and Wanita wings, which met on Monday, had unanimously agreed to state their stand because the division "supports and loves both leaders and cannot ignore the issue".

He said the division's support for Dr Mahathir's leadership was undisputed and proven as it was the chosen centre for Dr Mahathir's campaign in Penang when he was challenged for the presidency in 1987.

On the other hand, he said, Anwar was a leader who had contributed greatly to the party, the Malays in Penang in particular and the country in general.

Meanwhile, at a Press conference this afternoon, Tanjung division chairman Ahmad Ibni Hajar voiced the division's support for the decisions taken by Dr Mahathir, the supreme council and the stand of the State Umno liaison committee in supporting these decisions.

He said the division's officials, including those from the Youth and Wanita wings who met Friday, had unanimously decided to support Dr Mahathir's leadership.

Present with Ahmad were division Youth chief Raja Munir Shah Raja Mustapha, division Wanita chief Norjan Abdul Hamid, division secretary Noor Rahim Abdul Wahab, division treasurer Abdullah Ariff and division information chief Abdul Ghani Ali Kadir.

Ahmad was not present at the State liaison meeting on Sunday but the division, represented by his deputy Kapt Mohd Noor Abdul Ariff, went along with the decision to support Dr Mahathir's actions.

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