

05/09/1998

BN components support Umno council decision

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Barisan Nasional component party leaders responded positively to the Umno supreme council's decision last night to expel Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said today BN component parties have the prerogative to make decisions concerning their own parties.

Therefore, he said other members of the coalition would not interfere in the decisions.

Samy Vellu said this to reporters when asked on Umno's move to expel Anwar after he opened the Construction Industry Dialogue 1998 at the Malaysia International Exhibition and Showroom at Seri Kembangan.

MCA President and Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said Anwar's dismissal was Umno's decision and others had no right to question it.

"The council must have studied and debated the facts presented to it before making the decision by taking into consideration the party interest," he told reporters after witnessing the signing of memorandum on the incentive scheme provided for feeder operators to Port Klang at his Ministry today.

Asked about Dr Mahathir's decision not to appoint a Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Ling said:

"The Government is made up of a team of people who collectively make the decision on policy matters. Just because it is now minus one member, it does not mean the Cabinet will be less effective."

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik has urged all BN component party members not to overreact to Anwar's removal.

He said all concerned should put the stability and security of the country above personal interests and be careful not to cause any disorder.

Speaking to reporters after a Johor Gerakan seminar in Johor Baru, Dr Lim, who is also Primary Industries Minister, said political instability would drive foreign investors away.

Dr Lim said the Gerakan Central Working Committee at its meeting last night, had pledged its undivided support for Dr Mahathir and his decision to sack his deputy.

Penang BN chairman and Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon today expressed shock at Anwar's dismissal, but respected the Prime Minister's decision.

"Penang BN gives its confidence to Dr Mahathir in solving the country's current issues."

Koh expressed confidence that the working relationship between the Federal and State governments would continue smoothly despite Anwar's sacking.

Asked for his personal views on Anwar's expulsion, he said: "I have always looked up to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as a father and Datuk Seri Anwar as an elder brother. Of course, it personally affected me."

"However, on the administrative and political levels, we must ensure there is political stability and peace, and at this time we must rally behind the leadership of Dr Mahathir."

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