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Sabbaruddin-Umno

DISMISSAL FROM UMNO NOTHING NEW, SAYS SABBARUDDIN

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4 (Bernama) -- Umno secretary-general Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said today expulsion of party leaders was not new as it had been done before.

"Even (Prime Minister) Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had been expelled from the party. The only difference is that he was not given a chance to defend himself.

"But Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was given the chance to defend himself against the allegations. He was given ample time to speak," he told reporters when asked to comment on the Umno Supreme Council's unanimous decision to expel Anwar from the party.

Earlier, Sabbaruddin, who is Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister, opened Hotel Sun Inns at Bandar Sunway.

On the possibility of Anwar's supporters protesting against the decision, he said, party leaders at all levels were responsible to calm down the situation.

"It's impossible for all (members) to understand (the supreme council's decision). But what's important in any party is that one person doesn't make the party, it's overall," he said.

He also said expelled party members could re-apply to join Umno after three years.

Asked whether the party's Disciplinary and Management Committee chairman's post would be filled following Anwar's expulsion, Sabbaruddin said he did not have the authority to decide on the matter.

"The post need not necessarily be held by the deputy president. Others can also be appointed but I do not know if there will be an appointment," he said.

Asked whether a special committee would be set up to investigate the allegations against Anwar, he said, "it's the job of the police and the courts, not ours."

-- BERNAMA

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