

25 SEP 1998

Mahathir-Anwar

DR MAHATHIR EXPLAINS SWIFT ACTION AGAINST ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he had to act swiftly against his former deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to avoid having an immoral leader as his successor should anything happen to him.

"I have to act swiftly because should anything happen to me, he does not succeed me," he said when opening Women's Day celebrations organised by Wanita Umno at the Putra World Trade Centre here today.

Anwar was sacked as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister on Sept 2 and expelled from Umno the next day.

Anwar, who led an illegal procession from the National Mosque here on Sunday, was later arrested by police and is currently detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA) for inciting rioting and threatening national security.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, reiterated that Anwar was unfit to lead the country and that the people have seen how one of their leaders could easily succumb to lust.

"And when he becomes a leader, he will be easily manipulated by foreigners," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar would later be exposed to various temptations created by foreigners to satisfy his lust and they would in turn also control him.

"If we have such a leader, Malaysia will lose her independence," the prime minister said.

Dr Mahathir asked the Umno women's wing and party members at large whether they were willing to see Umno split merely to endorse such leaders.

Anwar has been implicated in at least two sexual offences when two men last Saturday confessed in court that they had allowed themselves to be sodomised by the ex-DPM, an offence under Section 377D of the Penal Code.

Dr Mahathir said Umno members should think deeply the problems that had hit the country.

"If we get carried away by foreign media propaganda, Umno may be divided," he said.

Dr Mahathir said even in the past they were moves by certain parties out to split Umno.

"Past attempts to divide Umno were prompted by selfish motives," said Dr Mahathir.

Umno members would now have to appraise whether there was sincerity in those past actions, he said.

Dr Mahathir said the foreign media's doctoring of reports of last Sunday's disturbances here by Anwar's supporters was to give the impression that Anwar had large support.

"This is aimed at deceiving the people so that the masses would side with Anwar and hence split Umno," he said.

The prime minister said the fact was that only a handful of Umno members supported Anwar and those who did, believed that Anwar had been victimised.

"But many, including Anwar's own friends no longer hold that belief upon being enlightened (on Anwar's expulsion)," he said.

Dr Mahathir said by inciting the people to riot it was clear that Anwar was trying to protect himself from facing trial in an open court.

"He reckoned that if President Suharto can be toppled through rioting,

this too could be done in Malaysia and democratically elected leaders will have to step down," said Dr Mahathir.

The prime minister said Anwar believed that this way a trial against him could not be initiated.

"This is the aim of the riots that is to avoid trial for the allegations against him because an open trial will expose all his misdemeanours and the people will lose trust in him," he said.

Dr Mahathir said he was aware that many Umno members thought the allegations against Anwar are baseless.

"In fact I myself did not believe it at the beginning although (former Inspector-General of Police) Tun Haniff Omar reported to me way back in '93 about the inclinations of my deputy.

"I dismissed it then but when I have concrete proof, I can't afford to ignore it. I have to act," said the prime minister.

Dr Mahathir said unlike people in other countries such as the United States, Malaysians could not accept a leader with low morals because of the eastern values and Islamic faith they uphold.

He said Westerners could accept a man kissing another or a leader bringing along a male companion to social functions.

"That is how liberal western views are. It's not strange and it's accepted.

"But in Malaysia we reject such extreme acts. We accept men as men and women as women," said Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir said God has determined a permanent distinction between the genders for human beings "and we have to recognise the fact and the distinction."

"For us here we know and accept the fact. We accept the differences and similarities between man and woman," he said.

Elaborating the difference between humans and animals, he said:" A male animal, a cock for instance is more beautiful because of its colourful feathers. But it is not so for a male human although there are men who at times appear attractive.

"When we ignore this natural phenomenon, chaos sets in," said the prime minister.

As such, he said, he urged Umno members to preserve party unity and not to let it be undermined by any quarters.

"Today we (Umno) are facing a little problem which nonetheless will have to be dealt with carefully. Getting carried away will only derail Umno from furthering its ideals and cause started more than 50 years ago.

"Umno's struggles are far from over. Unity is the prerequisite for the success of our cause. Our struggles may fail if we're careless in tackling this matter," added Dr Mahathir.

-- BERNAMA

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