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Anwar-Daim

DAIM'S APPOINTMENT ENHANCES COLLECTIVE ROLE, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, June 30 (Bernama) -- The appointment of Tun Daim Zainuddin as a Cabinet minister will enhance the collective role of the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) to stimulate the Malaysian economy and overcome problems the economy is facing, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said he and Daim had been working together for sometime since Daim was appointed executive director of NEAC when it was formed in December last year to tackle the economic crisis.

Asked by reporters about suggestions that Daim's Cabinet appointment had weakened his own position, Anwar said: "I don't see why I need to respond in that negative sense because his position in the Cabinet would enhance the collective role of the NEAC because it is chaired by the PM (Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad), I as deputy and Daim a permanent member".

"So I think we should view this positively in working together to stimulate the economy and solve many of our problems," he told reporters after chairing the International Islamic University's (IIU) Council Meeting at its new campus in Gombak near here.

Daim, finance minister from 1984-1991, was appointed Special Functions Minister in the Prime Minister's Department dealing with economic development last Friday.

Anwar, making his first public comment on the appointment, said it appeared to have drawn many interpretations.

"That can't be avoided, but I was informed of the appointment by the Prime Minister and I view it positively as all this while we have worked as a team.

He said Dr Mahathir, Daim and he met almost every day along with several other officials to study the economic problems and adopt a common stand in tackling them.

"We can't stop others from making interpretations (about the appointment)," he said.

Anwar said the question of distribution and overlap of duties between him and Daim did not arise at all.

Earlier, Anwar who is also IIU President, said the council meeting discussed the university's development and took note of the current financial constraints.

"While cost-cutting measures have been adopted, I have asked that this should not affect students in terms of basic facilities," he said.

The IIU is also taking steps to speed up the development of the university's medical campus in Kuantan, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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