

21 MAY 1998

Anwar-Suharto

MALAYSIA WELCOMES PEACEFUL TRANSITION OF POWER IN INDONESIA

KUALA LUMPUR, May 21 (Bernama) -- Malaysia welcomes the resignation of President Suharto and the appointment of B.J. Habibie as the new president of Indonesia, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

Anwar said that Malaysia was happy that the transition of power was done peacefully and in accordance with Indonesia's Constitution.

He said Malaysia hoped that with this development, the political crisis in Indonesia could be solved peacefully so that the nation could concentrate on its economic recovery.

Anwar, who is Finance Minister, said this after announcing the appointment of the new Sabah Chief Minister on behalf of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is recovering in hospital after an operation to remove a blood clot in his left ankle.

Suharto resigned today following demands by the people for economic and political reforms in the wake of the republic's worst economic crisis since he took office 32 years ago.

Umno Youth described Suharto's resignation as a sacrifice by a leader for the sake of the nation and its people.

"Suharto's move shows that he is a statesman who has the interest of the nation and its people more than his own interest for power," said Umno Youth leader Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi in a statement.

He said that Umno Youth empathizes with the Indonesians who had "a heavy price to pay" for reforms.

Zahid hoped that Suharto's successor would continue with Indonesia's close cooperation with Malaysia because the excellent relationship was not only for bilateral interest but also for regional stability and development.

-- BERNAMA

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