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Najib-Anwar

MOST IMPROPER FOR ANWAR TO ATTACK A SYSTEM HE ONCE UPHELD, SAYS NAJIB

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4 (Bernama) -- Umno vice president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today it was most improper for former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to attack the country's system which he once upheld.

He said Anwar's action in alleging that there was a conspiracy at the highest level against him and casting aspersions on the country's system of government and also the integrity and professionalism of the police force in conducting investigations, was a serious matter.

"If we were to have doubts and suspicions of bodies such as these and then attack the system we once upheld and defended while in the government.... I feel it is not proper that when we are no longer in the government, we reject them all and make a very serious accusation," he told reporters after handing over Russian aerospace equipment to Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) here.

He was asked to comment on the decision of the Umno Supreme Council to expel Anwar from the party after a four-hour emergency meeting last night which ended early today.

Anwar was also removed as deputy prime minister and minister of finance on Wednesday. He is alleged to have committed sexual misconduct, treason and corruption in an affidavit by a senior police officer from Bukit Aman filed at the High Court here yesterday relating to the trial of Datuk S. Nallakaruppan.

Najib said that the Supreme Council's decision did not mean that Anwar had been found guilty of the allegations because if it was so, it would mean that the party had superceded the court of law.

He said that the decision taken was expulsion from the party to enable Anwar to clear himself and it should not be viewed as being unjust as it provided him the opportunity to seek justice through the legal process.

Najib said that the Supreme Council reached the decision after considering that Anwar should keep his private matters separate and not be linked to the party and his party position.

"We feel that since the allegations are serious, then appropriate steps should be taken by him to clear himself until he could convince (others) that the allegations are not true or otherwise through avenues available to people in such circumstances," said Najib who fully supported the decision.

He said that the Supreme Council felt that if Anwar was still the party's deputy president and a party member, then the party would also be dragged into the court case and similar situations.

"Therefore at first, we had hoped that he will bow out gracefully but he was adamant to remain in his position in the party and the Supreme Council made a decision to expel him from the party," he said.

Asked to comment on allegations by the foreign media that Anwar's expulsion and sacking were related to the party elections next year, Najib said that the decision to expel him was made based on the serious allegations involving his personal matters.

He said that so far there had been leaders who faced allegations and had been suspended but allegations against Anwar were most unusual, covering various aspects viewed as very serious.

The meeting, he said, had heard the explanation given by the Prime Minister that he have had adequate facts and basis to remove Anwar as deputy prime minister and minister of finance.

Anwar and all other members of the Supreme Council were given the opportunity to express their views, he said.

Asked whether this development would be detrimental to Umno's integrity especially in view of the next general election, Najib said it should be stressed that the party was fair and nobody including leaders were above the law.

On Dr Mahathir's decision that the post of Umno deputy president will be left vacant until the party elections next year while the post of deputy prime minister would most likely be left vacant for now, Najib said that it was the prerogative of the prime minister.

Appointment of all positions in the government was the prerogative of the prime minister and this should be respected, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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