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Shariff-Anwar

PULAU PINANG UMNO LEAVING IT TO DR MAHATHIR

BUTTERWORTH, Sept 4 (Bernama) -- Pulau Pinang Umno is leaving it to party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to appoint the new state's liaison chief following the expulsion of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from the party.

Until today, Anwar was Pulau Pinang Umno chief, a post he took over from Datuk Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi in July 1987.

Anwar's expulsion from the party by the Supreme Council early today came almost two days after he was sacked as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

Deputy state liaison chief Datuk Mohd Shariff Omar said the party president has the power under the Umno constitution to appoint the state liaison chief or deputy chief for a three-year term.

The president could also terminate the appointments any time, he said when met at his house in Tasek Gelugor, here today.

Shariff, who is also Deputy Chief Minister, said he would exercise the power vested in him in the absence of the state liaison chief to convene a meeting on Sunday to discuss the matter.

He was confident that party members would place the interest of the party above all else and would continue to give their support to party president.

Umno members should accept the unanimous decision to expel Anwar and not to be carried away by their emotions, he said.

"There are members probably still emotional and angry but I am confident they have no intention of leaving the party," he said.

Meanwhile, a visit by Bernama found Anwar's family house in Cherok Tok Kun locked and deserted.

There was also not much going on at the Permatang Pauh Umno Building with a few people hanging around and talking among themselves. Anwar is the Member of Parliament for Permatang Pauh.

Meanwhile, a writer Kassim Ahmad expressed full support to Dr Mahathir's decision to sack Anwar.

State DAP chairman, Karpal Singh said the removal of Anwar from his government posts and even from Umno come as a shock to him.

Anwar should have been given the opportunity to clear himself before the wide-scale public disclosure of serious allegations against him in the form of affidavits made public in Court proceedings in which he is not even a party, he said in a statement.

-- BERNAMA

ZU ABG