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Umno leaders satisfied with PM's explanation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - A cross-section of Umno leaders who attended the briefing given by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today came out satisfied with the lengthy explanation for the expulsion of deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

They believed that they were now well equipped to explain to the grassroots the reasons which led to the removal of Anwar from the Cabinet and expulsion from the party.

All those interviewed were in agreement that the party president's explanation had further strengthened their belief that the action against Anwar was right and that it had to be taken to safeguard the party's image besides the country and religion.

Negeri Sembilan Menteri Besar Tan Sri Isa Samad said Dr Mahathir's briefing would now make it easier for leaders to explain the matter to the grassroots.

Supreme Council member Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, who is also International Trade and Industry Minister, said with the lengthy explanation, all right-thinking Umno members should now be able to weigh the truth regarding the issue.

Rafidah added that while many might find it difficult to swallow some part of the explanation because of the seriousness of the allegations against Anwar, they have to accept it if they were seeking the truth.

Another Supreme Council member, Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayob said he was relieved to hear the explanation as it had now cleared the air.

The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister said there would be no more confusion among Umno members as to why such actions were taken against Anwar.

Megat Junid said the explanation had now made it easier for him to explain the matter to the grassroots.

Youth and Sports Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said it was clear from the explanation that Dr Mahathir could not compromise on the question of the integrity of the party.

Muhyiddin said: "It is quite natural for this issue to take sometime to settle but I do not think it will take too long following the comprehensive explanation from Dr Mahathir".

He added that the briefing had removed doubts and uncertainty among party members.

Another Supreme Council member Datuk Dr Affifuddin Omar said, judging from the response from the people in the hall, they were satisfied with Dr Mahathir's explanation.

Dr Mahathir's briefing, he said, would enable the leaders to explain the matter fully to members.

Selangor Umno Youth head Jaya Kusuma Rusman said with the explanation, members would now understand why such drastic measures needed to be taken against Anwar.

Sabah Wanita Umno head Datuk Norjan Khan Bahadar said she was totally satisfied with Dr Mahathir's explanation and would do her best to brief members who were not able to come to Kuala Lumpur today.

"Knowing the details of the circumstances leading to Anwar's expulsion, we are now satisfied that Dr Mahathir had done the right thing," she added.

MP for Yan Datuk Badruddin Amiruldin said he wholly believed that Dr

Mahathir's explanation would wipe out any confusion over the issue.

"It is now much clearer...it is easier for us to brief the grassroots on what actually happened."

Federal Territory Umno Liaison Committee chairman, Datuk Suleiman Mohamad said Dr Mahathir's explanation was too convincing not to be accepted.

The explanation contained enough details that can be used to explain to ordinary members.

"It is also totally unthinkable that Umno members will believe Anwar's version, as it will also mean that they will have to believe that our president will stoop that low as to fabricate something that terrible about his former deputy.

"There is no reason for Dr Mahathir to mention acts which are considered an aberration by Muslims if his intention is only for personal interest."

MP for Machang Datuk Shukri Mohd said he was also convinced and that the action taken by Dr Mahathir was correct.

"What is even more convincing to me is the responsible manner in which Dr Mahathir had approached the issue and how painful it is for him to act the way he had," he added.

Silam MP Datuk Railey Jeffrey said the explanation had answered all the questions that members were asking since Anwar was expelled.

"I believe, it is now the duty of other leaders to explain the matters to members who are not here today," he added.

Jeram State Assemblywoman Mesrah Selamat said that even without the explanation she had already started explaining to her constituents why Dr Mahathir had to sack Anwar.

"After today, it will be easier as I am now confident that I will be able to do so more convincingly."

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