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Court-Anwar (Meeting)

ANWAR CONFIDED WITH IGP ON HIS DIFFERENCES WITH PM, COURT TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim told the High Court here today that he had confided with the then Inspector-General of Police, Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor, on the "major political differences" between him and the prime minister.

He described the meeting, held sometime in early August last year, as "very critical" and that he was "very frank and open" in his discussion with Rahim.

"That meeting to my mind was very critical because after sometime I was very frank and open with him. I said yes, I do have major political differences with the PM," he said.

Anwar was making his defence on four counts of corrupt practice that he used his position as deputy prime minister and finance minister to interfere in police investigations into allegations of sexual misconduct against him.

Today is the third day of his testimony under oath on the 53rd day of the trial before Justice Datuk S. Augustine Paul.

Anwar, 51, was dismissed from his cabinet posts on Sept 2 last year.

To a question by his leading counsel, Raja Aziz Addruse, Anwar said he made the admission when he was alone with Rahim in his office in the Prime Minister's Department.

Deputy IGP Tan Sri Norian Mai and CID Director Datuk Yaakub Amin had earlier left the meeting, the second he had held with Rahim and senior police officers regarding the case, Anwar said.

The first meeting took place in June at his official residence, also attended by Norian and two other officers.

He said this first meeting, which he remembered took place quite late as he did not serve them drinks as his wife and servant were asleep, was after his police report and the wide circulation of the book, "50 Dalil Kenapa Anwar Tidak Boleh Jadi POM" (50 Reasons Why Anwar Cannot Be PM).

The second meeting, Anwar said, was held after his tennis partner, Datuk Nallakaruppan's, arrest.

He said that during the second meeting he told Rahim that he did not intend to challenge Dr Mahathir and had reminded Rahim that, as the IGP with the Special Branch under him, he was duty bound to give the correct advice to the PM on the strong undercurrents.

Anwar said he gave certain examples of these undercurrents to Rahim.

He said his letters to the PM dated Aug 25 and Aug 28 were a follow-up on the discussions with the IGP and AG.

Anwar, who was on several occasions reminded by Justice Paul to stop referring to political conspiracy when testifying on his meetings with Dr Mahathir, in one instance said: "Your Lordship, you said don't talk about political conspiracy. I don't know what to do with my defence. If I can't refer to these meetings, I'm helpless."

Anwar said he held at least 10 meetings with the prime minister from late June and the meeting on the day he was sacked on Sept 2 was a follow-up to the information he got from Tun Daim Zainuddin, who came to see him at his office on Aug 12 at 8.30am.

He claimed that Daim told him that the Attorney-General (AG), Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah, "is contemplating charges against me".

"From Tun Daim's information I went straight to the PM's office. I protested why the AG chose to brief Daim. Has he been delegated with these

responsibilities? Is it because money can buy everything?" he said.

At this juncture, senior deputy public prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail objected to Anwar's comment and the judge ruled that the evidence should not extend to the opinion of a witness.

Anwar continued, saying that there were heated discussion with the PM but the judge interrupted and told Raja Aziz to proceed with the next question.

Justice Paul said the issue was irrelevant to the case and advised the defence to confine itself to the conspiracy by the police, if any.

Raja Aziz told the court that the defence was merely trying to prove that there was mala fide and the credibility of the witnesses including the police officers.

When asked by his counsel whether he knew the reasons for his arrest on Sept 20, Anwar said he was informed by a police officer that he was being arrested under section 377B of the Penal Code.

"I was blindfolded, handcuffed and brought to lock-up number six, Bukit Aman. On that night I was assaulted by the police," he said before the judge stopped him, saying his remarks were not relevant as there was another commission to look into that.

When asked about his statement to the police, Anwar said that only one question was put to him, that is, whether he gave any directive to the police to close the case relating to the poison-pen letters investigated by the police.

"My answer was, no, I did not. That was the first time the police asked me (about the matter) since the investigation was conducted in 1997 and this happened to be the first serious question by the CID after I was arrested," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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