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Explanation on the issue of Anwar well accepted

JOHOR Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech reminded party members of attempts to weaken Umno, from within the country and externally.

"Members should be aware of such attempts. I am confident the lengthy explanation on the current political and economic situation by Dr Mahathir would further strengthen the resolve of party members to continue their struggles."

Ghani said it was timely and appropriate that Dr Mahathir spoke at great length on the case involving former deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, at the general assembly, as it was done at a party platform.

Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid said Umno members should no longer feel shy to talk about the moral issues which led to the expulsion of Anwar now that the Prime Minister had openly talked about it.

He said the party president had now addressed the issue and confirmed certain information which Umno members had already obtained from various sources on the matter.

Dr Mahathir, he said, talked about Anwar's dismissal at length in his speech because he wanted party members to address the issue openly.

"People are shy to tell the truth ... the Prime Minister has broken the ice by talking openly."

Sharing his views was Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim who believed the delegates understood the message well, and accepted in good faith Dr Mahathir's explanation.

"People know what had happened in Anwar's case but did not want to talk about it because they did not want to be unpopular among those who supported Anwar."

Shahidan said the main message which Dr Mahathir had put across was that Anwar could also have been sacked for going against him (Prime Minister), but the former Deputy Prime Minister was sacked on moral grounds which is something difficult for the people to accept.

Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said Dr Mahathir's speech clearly showed he wanted the people to be more committed to protecting the country's independence.

He said the people should treasure what the country had achieved so far.

"We must be mindful of the Prime Minister's advice for the people to be responsible for their own country, and not to take a wrong step that could destroy the country which has been independent for more than 40 years," he said.

Terengganu Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad said the development and progress of a country required the leadership of a visionary who has the ability to formulate strategies.

He said Dr Mahathir was one such leader and his presidential address amplified his concern over matters affecting the people.

On the Anwar issue, he said Dr Mahathir knew better than anyone else about his former deputy because he was with Anwar for 16 years.

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