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Ibrahim-Bar

IBRAHIM TAKES BAR COUNCIL TO TASK ON STATEMENT

PETALING JAYA, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Ibrahim Ali today took Bar Council president R.R. Chelvarajah to task for calling for a Royal Commission of Inquiry to probe the alleged arsenic poisoning suffered by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"It is highly unbecoming, very irresponsible and unethical of Chelvarajah to issue the statement when Malaysia is hosting an international law conference," he told Bernama on the sidelines of the 12th Commonwealth Law Conference, here.

Ibrahim said he found copies of the statement at the venue of the conference which is being attended by some 1,500 participants from about 40 Commonwealth member nations.

He said the government had immediately started an investigation when a police report on the matter was lodged by Anwar and as such everyone should wait until the investigations were completed.

While welcoming the government's announcement of an immediate investigation into the alleged arsenic poisoning, Chelvarajah in the statement called for a Royal Commission of Inquiry to "speedily" determine the cause.

Ibrahim questioned Chelvarajah's motive in bringing up the matter at this juncture.

He said Chelvarajah should have brought up the setting up of the Royal Commission through the proper channel, such as submitting a request to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who opened the four-day conference earlier today.

Ibrahim said he was told by several members of the Bar executive council that they did not discuss the matter beforehand.

Commenting on the same matter, People's Progressive Party (PPP) president Datuk M. Kayveas said it was not proper for Chelvarajah to issue such a statement.

"I would welcome it if he had issued the statement immediately after the alleged arsenic poisoning came to light. Obviously, this is not acceptable and can damage this country's reputation," he said.

He also said the conference should not be used to harp on the issue of alleged non-independence of the judiciary.

-- BERNAMA

RV THG