

21/09/1999

PM: Government will weather attempts to incite demos, riots

KANGAR, Mon. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said attempts by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to incite demonstrations and riots will not affect the strength and credibility of the Barisan Nasional Government.

The BN, he said, would continue to defend the country from falling into the hands of those who lied to the people through campaigns carried out by opposition parties.

"It's true that Anwar had tried to threaten the BN Government through street demonstrations in Kuala Lumpur. This is an attempt ... but it will not threaten the Government.

"It may worsen the economy a bit ...

"Maybe these things will happen but our country can still be defended by the credible BN Government."

Speaking at a gathering of Perlis BN leaders at the Dewan Warisan today, the BN chairman said there was no other alternative party to BN.

He said only BN could develop the country and the Opposition's "alternative front" could never achieve what BN had achieved, particularly the practice of power-sharing among the races.

He said because there was peace, the Government could concentrate on efforts to revive the economy.

Also present at the gathering of about 2,000 people were Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, Umno secretary-general and Information Minister Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob and Umno information chief Datuk Dr Yusof Nor.

In the evening, addressing some 25,000 people at Stadium Utama, Dr Mahathir said Anwar's supporters had accused a Deputy Minister from Perlis and Datuk Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin, the Prime Minister's political secretary, of poisoning the former Deputy Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir said he received the information on the allegations today.

The Prime Minister did not disclose where the information came from nor the name of the Deputy Minister.

Datuk Azmi Khalid, who is Deputy Home Minister, is the only Deputy Minister from Perlis.

"Today, I came to know that they had accused two people, one a Deputy Minister from Perlis for putting poison in the food served to Anwar.

"The other person is my political secretary who is accused of poisoning Anwar ... and they had threatened to kill Aziz," the Prime Minister said.

Dr Mahathir also questioned whether the urine sample sent for tests at a laboratory in Australia indeed belong to Anwar.

The Prime Minister said such accusations were not the first for Anwar as he had, in 1974, alleged that a boy had died of hunger (kebuluran) in Baling, Kedah.

"Because of this, he (Anwar) had incited university students to demonstrate ... the same thing he is doing now."

Dr Mahathir also called on Pas members to leave the party and support Barisan Nasional as Pas is destroying the country.

He called on them to emulate some DAP members who had left the party because they did not want to be controlled by Lim Kit Siang and his son Guan Eng.

Dr Mahathir said Keadilan members who had acquired wealth from Anwar should also leave the party and forget about Anwar.

The people were also reminded of the failure of two opposition State

Governments in ruling their respective states and in fighting for the people's well-being.

He said Sabah was underdeveloped under Parti Bersatu Sabah as its leader Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan was incapable of managing the state's affairs.

Today, he said the Pas Government of Kelantan had also failed to bring about development to the state and its people.

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