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Abdullah-Poison

TESTS SHOW NO PROOF OF ANWAR IBRAHIM'S ARSENIC POISONING, SAYS DPM

TAIPING, Oct 3 (Bernama) -- Clinical tests, including those done overseas, so far show no truth in the allegation that jailed former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim suffered arsenic poisoning, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi said.

Even so, the police were continuing with their investigation into the alleged attempt to subject Anwar to arsenic poisoning, said Abdullah, who is also Home Minister.

" So far... investigations carried out using domestic and foreign laboratory facilities show that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has not suffered poisoning," he said when launching the second national convention of listeners, viewers and readers' groups at the municipal square here today.

Speaking to reporters later, Abdullah said he had not received a full report from Hospital Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (HUKM) which has been examining Anwar for arsenic poisoning since last Sept 10.

Abdullah also told reporters that he expected the police to complete their investigation in two or three days time.

"Obviously whatever the outcome of the HUKM tests will be submitted to the court," he said.

Anwar, who is currently on trial for sodomy, was admitted to HUKM in Kuala Lumpur on Sept 10 for examination after his counsel told the High Court that Anwar was being poisoned with arsenic.

Anwar's trial was postponed from that date until last Monday.

Abdullah said: " Upon completion of the test report, we'll be able to know... we can't lie and we can't assume that the people are naive and easily gullible and manipulated into believing those out to create anxiety."

He said the impending general election gave rise to all sorts of accusations, including that Anwar has been poisoned.

But such deceitful tactic as well as various other disinformation should not be adopted to turn the people against the government, he said.

" What purpose does it serve...to misinform the people with sensationalised lies just to shock the people and create a public uprising," he said.

Abdullah asked was it fair to accuse the government and national leaders of conspiring to poison the former deputy prime minister.

Last Sept 10 counsel Karpal Singh told the court hearing Anwar's sodomy trial that the accused's urine samples tested in Australia showed that Anwar had a high level of arsenic poisoning.

Karpal also claimed in court that those in high places were behind the poisoning.

Abdullah advised the people to reject information, incitement and actions that could undermine public order and national security to help sustain peace in Malaysia.

He said the people should appreciate that nation-building efforts were in their interests and that the legal and judicial institutions were for their protection.

Abdullah advised Malaysians, especially the Malays, to refrain from discrediting leaders, which he said is " taboo in our race".

"It's okay to criticise. Leaders can take criticisms and are open to others' views but don't degrade, like calling (prime minister Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir Mohamad a pharaoh. This is bad," he said.

The way they tackled the 1997 economic crisis without kow-towing to outside forces, including the International Monetary Fund, reflected the hard work put in by the country's leaders to guide Malaysia towards further advancement while preserving national sovereignty, he said.

Despite being criticised, discredited and abused from all sides the government would not let the country, that has taken it years to develop, to crumble or leave the people in misery, he said.

The government owed it much to the people's solid support for the success of its measures for economic recovery which was not disrupted by industrial action by workers or farmers' revolt, he said.

"The political stability and the people's understanding have inspired the government to be more determined than ever to reactivate the economy. The people's attitude is most appreciated," he said.

While it strove to build the world's tallest building -- the Petronas Twin Towers - and the new federal administrative capital in Putrajaya, using mainly local expertise, the government had never abandoned the poor and the less fortunate or reduce allocations for improving their lot, he added.

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