

If Anwar was axed, why not Johari and Zulkipli?
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If former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim could be sacked based on allegations, what is stopping Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi from doing the same to those implicated in the recent high-profile corruption scandals?

This question was raised in a memorandum from Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), PAS and two anti-corruption watchdogs submitted to the premier's office in Putrajaya today.

In 1998, former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad had sacked Anwar from all his posts following allegations of sexual misconduct and abuse of power.

"Back then, he (Anwar) was sacked based on allegations (alone), the cases were not even brought to court as yet," read the three-page memorandum.

"So what's the rationale for the government to not do the same to Deputy Internal Security Minister Mohd Johari Baharum and Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) director-general Zulkipli Mat Noor?" it added.

Furthermore, it stated that the allegations against the duo were far more serious than those concerning Anwar, who is currently the PKR advisor.

Johari has been accused of accepting RM5.5 million in bribes to free criminal suspects held under the Emergency Ordinance (EO) whereas Zulkipli is alleged to have amassed properties and wealth beyond his means.

The cases are currently being investigated. Both Johari and Zulkipli have denied the claims.

Walk the talk

Meanwhile, the memorandum also called for the duo to be suspended in order not to compromise the investigations against them.

Speaking to reporters later, PAS Youth chief Salahuddin Ayub said the two are still in a position to influence the investigations.

In view of this, he urged Abdullah to take stern action.

"The prime minister must clear the air. That is the message we want to deliver. He has to put his foot down, he has to walk the talk," he said.

PKR Youth acting chief Shamsul Iskandar MD Akin stressed on the need for fair and free investigations.

Apart from this, the memorandum also demanded that the premier form an independent commission to improve the ACA and to make public the agency's standard operation procedure.

It also called for the ACA be placed under Parliament, instead of the Prime Minister's Department.

The memorandum stated that the government make public the result of the investigation on 18 high profile individuals for graft, which former de facto law minister Rais Yatim said the government was investigating in 2004.

It also demanded to know the status of investigations into the allegation of corruption against Abdul Rahim Thamby Chik and International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz.

In addition to this, the government was also urged to investigate the allegation raised by Anwar that the government purchased 18 Russian jet fighters for RM3.2 billion under a dubious deal.

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