

Retract remarks or be expelled, Anwar told
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Criticisms against Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim's controversial statement on Israel continue to pour in, with a protest planned against him in Penang today.

The rally by several Muslim groups, to be held at the Dhoby Ghaut Mosque after Friday prayers, demands Anwar to withdraw his support for Israel or be expelled from Pakatan Rakyat.

Failing which the groups will call for PAS to relinquish their membership in Pakatan. They are also inviting all PAS members who share their views to join in the peaceful gathering.

The Penang Malay Congress has also jumped onto the bandwagon with its president Rahmad Isahak saying that Anwar has disparaged his own reputation as a Malay Muslim leader in Malaysia.

Rahmad said the issue may have been politicised by local politicians, but Anwar has now attracted criticisms even from international leaders.

The NGO is giving Anwar seven days to explain himself or face the wrath of the people, including a deficit in his support bank.

"To restore his credibility, Anwar must present a rational and logical clarification of his Israel statement if he is interested in restoring his image as a Malay Muslim leader," he added at a press conference in Penang.

The NGO, which claims to be neutral and independent, was referring to the Permatang Pauh MP's comment in an interview with the Asian Wall Street Journal recently which quoted him as saying that he supported "all efforts to protect the security of the state of Israel".

Anwar queried by closest allies

This has caused an avalanche of criticisms on Anwar, who was even questioned by his closest ally in Pakatan Rakyat, PAS spiritual head Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat.

The Kelantan menteri besar had asked Anwar to either demand the AWSJ to retract and clarify the report or sue the international newspaper for "twisting" his statement.

Rahmad said Anwar must explain why he is not suing AWSJ if the newspaper had indeed "twisted" his words.

He added that Malaysians, especially the Muslim community, wanted to know if Anwar would establish diplomatic relations with Israel if he became the prime minister.

He also wanted to know if it were true, as alleged by expelled former Selangor PAS executive councillor Hasan Ali that Malaysia would become a republic if Pakatan Rakyat took over Putrajaya in the coming polls.

Hasan has since said his remarks, which also included saying that Malaysia would merge with Singapore if Pakatan came to power was merely a "prediction".

"If Anwar fails to explain himself in the stipulated time frame, it would only cause negative impact and bring about a deficit in support for him as the country's political leader," he said.

“By then his remark (on Israel) would be considered as something that is beyond reasonable doubt,” he added.

Rahmad said in these critical conditions where the 13th general election is around the corner, the people would act as the “big boss” and decide on the kind of government they want.

“The economy and welfare of their community is what matters most. Citizens are already fed up with the political games where they would eventually become the victims,” he stressed.

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