

Anwar: BN MPs descend to new low
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Parti Keadilan Rakyat advisor Anwar Ibrahim waded into the controversy surrounding sexist remarks made by two Barisan Nasional MPs by saying that he understood "the outrage felt, particularly by women groups, at this new low in the level of discourse in the hallowed halls of Parliament."

"Language is the dress of thought," said the PKR leader quoting Samuel Johnson, "and the language of some BN MPs in what is supposed to be a hallowed chamber points to the level of their thought."

He described this level as "despicable" and wondered, "What are they doing in the Dewan!?"

Last week BN members of Parliament Mohd Said Yusof (Jasin) and Bung Mokhtar Radin (Kinabatangan) uttered sexist insults at DAP MP for Batu Gajah Fong Po Kuan, to wit, that she "leaks once a month."

"This is not the first time that sexist and racist remarks have emanated from the backbenches of the Dewan," said Anwar.

"It would appear the failure of BN leaders to reprimand these puerile MPs have emboldened them such that they now descend to new lows in their speech," he elaborated.

"They seem to have become more and more brazen and the BN leaders find ever more spurious reasons to evade their responsibility in bringing them to heel," he added.

Serene detachment

He said the "whole sorry spectacle" made a hash of Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's concept of Islam Hadhari and raised questions whether the BN chief had his finger on the pulse.

Anwar said he recalled that Abdullah had "commendably taken the high road of merely expressing dismay" when some years ago he was derisively equated by some opposition leaders to a camel owner.

"His restrained expression of dismay struck me as a gentleman's response to an insult that in that instance did more damage to the one hurling it than the one targeted by it," he commented.

"But these days his silence in the face of verbal abominations from his ranks makes you wonder what has become of his gentlemanly façade," he said.

"This latest round of verbal abomination has struck a chord of anger among the people who know that past instances of such misbehaviour have led to the current offence but the PM appears serene in his detachment," lamented Anwar.