

Anwar: Chong did the right thing
Malaysiakini.com
April 16, 2007
Andrew Ong

Former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim regards Chong Kah Kiat's resignation as Sabah deputy chief minister as indicative of public dissatisfaction with the state government.

"It just means that he takes heed of the complaints from the rakyat," said Anwar when met after the Parti Keadilan Rakyat supreme council meeting yesterday.

In contrast, Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had described Chong's exit as "not a loss" last Friday.

Sabah Chief Minister Musa Aman, was equally nonchalant when quizzed by reporters the same day in Kuala Lumpur.

Chong, who heads the Chinese-based Liberal Democratic Party, had made a shocking exit from Musa's cabinet earlier that day.

Other than stating that his decision was based on principles, Chong declined to reveal the exact reason for his resignation.

Speculation is rife that ties between Chong and Musa have been severely strained over many past and current issues affecting Sabah.

'Lobbying is normal'

Anwar brushed off suggestions that PKR would begin courting Chong to join the party, which has identified Sabah as a frontline state for the next general election.

"That's up to him to decide," said Anwar, who has been campaigning heavily for PKR in Sabah of late and is a fierce critic of the Umno-led state government.

Anwar said the intense lobbying within PKR over candidates to be fielded during the upcoming Ijok by-election is "normal".

"Where is there politics without any lobbying?" he said when asked to comment on the campaigning by a group of Indian Malaysian PKR leaders led by Youth vice-chief S Manikavasagam (photo).

"We will listen to all... but people should appreciate the democratic process. No one should give any ultimatum on the candidacy of both shortlisted candidates."

Manikavasagam's faction is planning a tell-all press conference tomorrow, coinciding with PKR's naming of its candidate.

The party is likely to choose treasurer Khalid Ibrahim (photo), as this has received the backing of opposition ally PAS in a bid to capture votes from the majority Malay electorate.

This has irked Indian supporters who would like to see greater opposition representation of

their community.

Ijok also has a sizeable Indian electorate and has traditionally been contested by MIC.

Some PKR leaders have pressed for newly recruited S Nallakaruppan -a popular ex-MIC politician - as the party candidate.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/65977>