

Anwar: 'Unfortunate' palace denied our request
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Kuek Ser Kuang Keng

Anwar Ibrahim said it was unfortunate that the Agong had ignored a request by 81 opposition MPs to defer the appointment of newly elected Umno president Najib Abdul Razak as prime minister.

The 81 MPs submitted the request in a petition to the palace yesterday urging His Majesty to defer the appointment until an independent commission clears Najib of the Altantuya Shaariibuu murder and questionable arms purchase commissions.

"It is unfortunate that our case was not given due consideration," he said when met in Sungai Tinggi, near Terong town, last night.

Najib was sworn in this morning as the country's sixth prime minister.

Anwar said Najib's immediate priorities should be to release all ISA detainees, ensure media freedom, independence of the judiciary and that the economic stimulus plan trickles down to the ground.

The opposition leader was taking time off from his hectic campaign schedule in Bukit Selambau, Kedah and Batang Ai, Sarawak to campaign for PAS' Mohd Nizar Jamaluddin who is contesting in Bukit Gantang, Perak.

Reporter intimidated

Anwar spoke for about half an hour in two back-to-back ceramah in Pekan Terong and nearby Sungai Tinggi yesterday. Both ceramah had crowds of about 500 to 600 people, who gathered under a drizzle.

In Pekan Terong, an ugly incident involving BN supporters and a reporter occurred immediately opposite the ceramah venue, where a BN ceramah was supposed to take place.

The incident occurred following the reporter's attempt to take pictures of an empty community hall where the Umno ceramah was suppose to be held.

The reporter, from a Ipoh community paper who declined to be named, was forced to delete the pictures after being confronted by some 10 BN supporters.

When approached by Malaysiakini after the incident, the reporter said that he would not be lodging a police report as he does not want to 'blow up' the issue.

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