

'I'LL SACK CONVICTED MINISTERS'

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PM says he is adopting a zero-tolerance approach to graft, stresses good governance

NOR AIN MOHAMED RADHI
PUTRAJAYA
news@nst.com.my

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said he will not hesitate to sack cabinet members who are found guilty of corruption.

He said he was adopting a zero-tolerance approach to corruption and stressed on the importance of good governance.

"I have told the component parties' leaders that should there be cabinet members who were found doing such (bribery and corruption), I will ask for the mandate to sack them with immediate effect.

"I will not compromise on this."

He said being in politics was not an opportunity for politicians to build wealth, become arrogant and enrich their relatives.

"With the system that was being practised before, people felt cynical and questioned the morals of leaders."

He said this at a gathering with ulama and asatizah (religious figures and religious authorities) at



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaking to guests during a gathering with ulama and asatizah (religious figures and religious authorities) at Seri Perdana Complex yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

Seri Perdana yesterday.

Present was Religious Affairs Minister Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

Anwar said he had not given anyone assurance that they would be freed from punishment for their court cases.

He said those with court cases would be free from punishment only if that was decided by independent and fair judges.

"If I ever wanted to compro-

mise, I would have become the prime minister a long time ago."

He said law enforcement agencies would have the freedom to carry out their duties.

"I have met the I-GP (Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Acryl Sani Abdullah Sani), the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, the attorney-general, as well as other authorities on the matter.

"I want to prove that there is a

Malay son who uses his power to take care of and fight for the people.

"I want to prove that people who believe in Islam will be respected and trusted because of the principles of mercy and justice that they uphold," he said.

Anwar said he had been given the mandate to lead in a situation where the country's debt had reached more than RM1 trillion.

He said the matter (on the

country's debt) was not "fitnah" (allegation) but established via checks conducted on agencies to find leakages.

"I worked hard to scrutinise all the files. That's why some projects were delayed, re-examined, or cancelled.

"I have no intention to insult any political figure, so I didn't mention names.

"But I mentioned the flood-mitigation projects because they are causing difficulties to the people, where the victims are mostly the poor with the majority being Malays," he said.

He said it was important to be careful (in spending money), as this was a matter of governance.

"In managing a country, we must follow the right order and rules.

"So when the flood-mitigation projects were approved spontaneously, with questionable companies, and some questions not answered, I asked for a postponement.

"Tomorrow (today), I will go to the Finance Ministry to study this.

"This matter is true. It was approved but not yet implemented because of the election."

He last week said he had put on hold a RM7 billion allocation approved by the previous administration for flood-mitigation initiatives, pending a review.

He had said that the allocation was approved through direct negotiation and not through tender.