

16 APR 1997

Umno-Veep

SUPREME COUNCIL TO DISCUSS TAIB'S POSITION NEXT MONTH?

KUALA LUMPUR, April 16 (Bernama) -- The Umno headquarters here is unsure whether the party supreme council will discuss the position of former Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib as a vice president at the council's meeting next month.

Umno secretary-general Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik contacted today said: "The matter may or may not be discussed."

He was commenting on yesterday's statement by Deputy Prime Minister and deputy party president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim that the party would discuss Muhammad's decision in retaining the party vice-presidency to which he was elected last October.

The supreme council held its last monthly meeting last Saturday.

"For the present, the agenda for the next meeting has not been determined." Sabbaruddin said.

Muhammad's resignation as Menteri Besar, Selangor and Federal Territory Umno liaison chief and chairman of the Federal Territory Barisan Nasional took effect last Monday.

This followed a court case in Brisbane where two charges were brought against him for failing to declare A\$1.2 million (RM2.4 million) at the Brisbane airport before leaving Australia on Dec 22 last year.

In announcing his resignation, Muhammad said he did not want the case to involve the party and the government.

Anwar said yesterday Muhammad had met him and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohammad on his decision to retain the party vice-president post.

"We have to respect his decision," Anwar had said.

Anwar had said that as for Muhammad's position in Umno, it would be decided by the party since it was a party matter.

Umno has three elected vice-presidents.

The Umno constitution is apparently silent on the powers of the supreme council in removing a member, including its president and deputy president.

However Clause 7.13 of the Umno constitution states: "The Supreme Council members, including the President and the Deputy President can be removed from office, or the supreme council can be dissolved with at least a two-third majority vote of members eligible for attendance."

In July 1974, the supreme council appointed Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, a council member to fill a vacant vice-president post, caused by the death of Tun Hussein Onn.

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Meanwhile, Umno Youth leader Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi felt it was proper that issue of Muhammad's position as vice-president be determined by the party's management committee and the Supreme Council.

Speaking to reporters after the opening of the Bumiputera Economic Development Expo here, he said society should be more sympathetic with those facing hardship.

"Now his turn, we don't know what awaits us. So, let him resolve his problem," he said. -- BERNAMA.

MAM SJA ABG AR RN