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Najib-Corrupt

UMNO WILL NOT SHIELD CORRUPT LEADERS, SAYS NAJIB

ALOR GAJAH, June 6 (Bernama) -- Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today the action taken against three party leaders by the party supreme council yesterday was inevitable in efforts to "clean up" Umno.

He said the decision sent a "clear and loud" signal that Umno adopted a firm stand and would not tolerate any form of irregularities in efforts to rid the party from corruption and power abuse.

A strong message that any form of malpractices would not be condoned or the culprits involved would not escape scot-free had been given many times by the party leadership, said Najib, who is Education Minister, to reporters after opening a manipulative workshop at Sekolah Menengah Naning in Simpang Ampat, near here.

The supreme council, Umno's highest policy-making body, suspended Wanita Umno Treasurer Siti Zainab Abu Bakar and secretary Senator Habshah Osman for their involvement in closing the movement's account and wrongfully transferring RM1.8 million from its coffers.

Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who chaired the three-hour meeting, said Siti Zainab was also relieved of her job as Deputy Primary Industries Minister with immediate effect.

The meeting also decided to suspend all party posts of Datuk Sahar Arpan, the former Melaka state executive councillor, who is facing three corruption charges in the Melaka High Court.

Najib said the "clean-up" exercise in the party started when Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad stressed on the need to wipe out money politics, corruption and abuse of power in Umno in his presidential address at the last Umno General Assembly.

"Since then, party leaders have been giving ample warnings, signals and criticisms on such ills in the party,

As such, it is time for us to take action so that the party leadership's credibility will not be disputed," he said.

"We must take action if we want to cleanse the party and government from black sheep and do not want corruption to be part of our culture or a disease which can erode people's confidence," he said.

Najib said the supreme council meted out a severe punishment as those involved were leaders who had contributed to the party and country.

"Nevertheless, we do not have a choice when wrongdoings are proven. By taking taken, we are not denying their services and sacrifices to the party but something unavoidable in our quest to uphold principles of our struggle," he

He said the supreme council's decision was a resolution to support the call and aspirations of the party leadership that stern action be taken against those involved in money politics, corruption and abuse of power. --

BERNAMA

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