

# Leaders **come out** of briefing convinced

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HABIB

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's explanation to Umno grassroots leaders yesterday have convinced them of the need to expel Datuk Seri **Anwar Ibrahim** from the party.

Malaysian Youth Council president Datuk **Suhaimi Ibrahim**, a staunch **Anwar** supporter, said he was totally shocked to learn about the former deputy president's low moral standings.

"All this while, I did not get the true picture and I respected Datuk Seri **Anwar** very much.

"**Ini** kejutan besar **bagi saya**. (This came as an extreme shock to me). I feel very sad today.

"Of course, I believe the party president. If not the president, who else can we **Umno** members believe in," **Suhaimi** said after attending the special briefing to explain the expulsion.

**Suhaimi** said **Anwar** should now take it in his stride and "it is better for him to take a rest, be calm and not try to make matters worse."

"**Anwar** should keep quiet and turn to the courts to fight his cause if he still believes he is right," he added.

Former vice-president **Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin**

ty posts in the 1993 Umno elections.

Seeambut division **Wanita** chief **Dr Norraesah Mohd** said she had her doubts about **Anwar's** expulsion before the briefing because she wanted to be extremely objective about the matter and because of **Anwar's** image as an Islamic leader.

"It is clear that in the briefing, **Dr Mahathir** was holding back in his explanation and not telling more than absolutely necessary, he did not want Umno members to turn into vultures which ravaged the fallen.

"The Prime Minister does not just ask for proof but demands hard proof.

"So the explanation has cleared a lot of doubts and **scepticism**," she said.

**Datuk Hassan Harun** from **Kubang Kerian** division said the explanation by **Dr Mahathir** showed how betrayed he felt in his "last moments of the journey as Prime Minister".

"I could feel his pain. I empathise with him for having to make this decision

"The decision was made from need and not out of political conveniences," he said, adding that members were behind the party leadership and gave **Dr Mahathir** a standing ovation after the explanation.

said members gave a firm commitment to safeguard the interest of the party.

"I don't think it would divide the party. The majority have accepted the explanation.

"But it will still take a couple of weeks to cool down as it is a big issue and it is natural for the grassroots to discuss it.

"I am very sad that it had happened. I am sorry for **Wan Azizah (Anwar's wife)** but that's politics.

"It's fate. As a Muslim, one must believe in takdir and should not be too angry or disheartened," said **Muhyiddin**, who was one of the leaders in the **Anwar-led Wawasan Team** which swept most top par-