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`Charge those responsible if claims are true'

SHAH ALAM, Wed. - Umno Youth deputy chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein today said if the allegations of assault made by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim were true, those responsible must be charged.

He said it was important the existing laws of the country be respected by all.

"Nobody is above the law. Datuk Seri Anwar is not above the law and at the same time if what he alleged in the court yesterday is true, I hope those responsible would also be brought to court," Hishammuddin told reporters after meeting 80 Institut Teknologi Mara administration and law students here.

Hishammuddin, who is Deputy Minister for Primary Industries, said from Umno Youth's viewpoint, it was important that the truth, fairness and the process of law must be a priority.

On Information Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Rahmat's statement that there were 90 branches which had received money from Anwar to topple Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Hishammuddin said the party's management and disciplinary committee would look into the matter, adding that such culture should not be allowed in Umno.

He said when money was used to influence Umno members, the standard of leadership at the divisional level would be cause for worry and this had to be prevented fast.

He said Umno members must ensure that Umno remained relevant and was the backbone of the Government.

On reports on Anwar's case by the foreign media, he reiterated that the foreign media had blown things out of proportion.

"They look for ways to exploit the situation. We should stress that we have a legal system which we must defend and not let it be used for the interests of an individual," he said, adding that Malaysia had so far been consistent in its approach to that.

On his meeting with the students, he said it was his first meeting with ITM students and that they were mature and rational.

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