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Najib-Petition

HEAR DR MAHATHIR'S EXPLANATION FIRST, ANWAR'S FORMER DIVISION TOLD

KUALA TERENGGANU, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Tun Razak today told Permatang Pauh Umno division to hear the explanation by party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad before sending him a petition over last week's sacking of deputy president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar was Permatang Pauh divisional head and Pulau Pinang Umno Liaison chief until last Thursday when he was sacked from the party, days after he was dismissed as deputy prime minister and finance minister.

Najib said Dr Mahathir would brief all Umno divisions in a day or two in Kuala Lumpur and Permatang Pauh Umno should hear the explanation before submitting a petition asking that Anwar be reinstated.

He said this when asked to comment on a signature campaign by Permatang Pauh Umno to get the support of some 13,000 party members in the division to appeal to Dr Mahathir to forgive his former deputy.

Dr Mahathir's decisions were never made in haste and his decision on Anwar was made after considering every evidence presented, he told reporters after opening a meeting of state executive councillors holding the education portfolio, here.

Najib, who is also Education Minister, advised students to concentrate on their studies and not to be involved in activities against the law or the Universities and University Colleges Act.

He said they could talk about politics so long it did not lead to unlawful assemblies and demonstrations or being involved in the distribution of political leaflets and documents.

So far, the situation in university campuses was under control and the police had also been directed to keep tabs on activities of the students to ensure that they would not be involved in unlawful activities, he said.

Najib said the directive was not meant to prevent the students from following current political issues in the country but there was no need for them to go overboard in their reactions to Anwar's dismissal.

On action by some students to throw missiles at Umno supreme council members at last Thursday's meeting of the council, he said the ministry had received report on the incident and was discussing with the police on possible action to be taken.

Najib said the ministry would also investigate report of students said to be distributing leaflets on the Anwar's case in Pulau Pinang.

-- BERNAMA

SBS ABG