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Zahid-Pressure

PRESSURE MOUNTS FOR ZAHID TO QUIT YOUTH POST

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today came under heavy pressure to quit the post as more youth leaders asked him to step down if he cannot accept Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's sacking from the government and party.

Sabah Umno Youth chief Jema Khan Majid Khan said the movement which met today to discuss Anwar's expulsion decided that Zahid must bow out gracefully.

He also called for disciplinary action to be taken against other youth leaders who were aligned to Anwar as they did not recognise the Supreme Council's decision to expel Anwar from Umno.

" If there were Umno leaders who cannot accept the council's decision, then it's better for them to leave the party," he told a media conference after the movement's meeting here today.

Three Umno Youth executive council members, Federal Territory Umno Youth and several divisional youth leaders from other states had earlier asked Zahid to quit for failing to state his stand on Anwar's removal.

Anwar, who is alleged to have involved in a sex scandal, was dismissed as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister on Wednesday and was expelled from Umno a day later. Anwar had denied all the allegations.

Jema Khan said he briefed Sabah Umno Youth leaders on the reasons and allegations against Anwar as explained by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in a closed-door meeting in Kuala Lumpur recently.

He said Sabah Umno youth leaders would go down to the grassroots to explain the issue to party members.

Meanwhile, Cheras Umno Division Youth chief Mahadi Haji Shukor called on Zahid to reveal his position on Anwar's removal as his silence on the issue thus far could be interpreted as supporting Anwar.

The Cheras Umno Youth supported the Supreme Council's decision and the leadership of Dr Mahathir, he said in a statement.

In SHAH ALAM, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Abu Hassan Omar also urged Zahid to state his stand "once and for all" in the movement's interests.

"It's better for him to reveal Umno Youth's stand on the issue," he told reporters.

In MELAKA, Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam urged Zahid to step down for reportedly supporting the reform movement led by Anwar.

" We need a youth leader who is firm and responsible. Judging from Zahid's actions, it looks like he disagrees to Anwar's expulsion," he told reporters after a special briefing on current issues organised by the Melaka Umno Liaison Committee.

Melaka Umno Youth head Nazari Adzim said Zahid should call for a meeting soon to decide on the movement's stand with regards to Anwar's removal.

In KOTA BAHARU, Kelantan Umno Youth head Zaiyadi Awang Noh said persistent calls for Zahid to quit could jeopardise Umno's stability.

He said it was premature for Zahid to resign from his post.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Umno information chief Datuk Dr Yusof Nor said Zahid should make a clear stand on Anwar's removal and not leave Umno Youth members in a lurch.

Umno Youth, as a wing of Umno, should back the party and support all decisions made by the party Supreme Council, he said when met at his

residence here.

Dr Yusof, who was once a deputy vice-chancellor of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, was also asked about the large number of university students reported to be turning up at Anwar's house to help out and attend ceramahs.

He said that from his experience, students got involved in political activities only at the urging of some other people.

Dr Yusof said the government might be forced to take action gainst the students as such activities were not permitted.

-- BERNAMA

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