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`Sacked duo's actions amount to betrayal'

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Umno Youth acting head Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein today labelled as "a betrayal" the actions of two sacked party members in issuing statements from abroad on the political developments in the country.

The two are former Penang Umno Youth chief Abdul Rahim Ghause and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's former political secretary Mohamad Ezam Mohd Noor who have been making statements in the Philippines and Indonesia respectively.

Speaking to reporters after chairing his first Umno Youth Executive Committee meeting in his new capacity, Hishammuddin said it was not right to use a foreign platform to do so.

"It is a betrayal of the country and party and it shows they are not committed to our struggle and that they do not love our country and party.

"People like that deserve to be sacked from the party," he said.

Meanwhile, Kelantan Umno deputy liaison chief Datuk Annuar Musa said Abdul Rahim was a coward to issue the statement from a foreign country instead of airing his grievances in the country like a true and responsible leader.

"I can only describe his action as the worst criminal act anybody can think of," he said.

Annuar was speaking to reporters after witnessing a memorandum of understanding signing ceremony between his Ministry and the International Islamic University for the Community Development (Kemas) Department's computer classes.

Abdul Rahim in his statement had among others accused the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad of neglecting the lower income group and clinging on to power in order to protect the business interests of his children and close associates.

Annuar said Abdul Rahim's statements were treacherous since it could give further room to the foreign Press to undermine Government's effort to revive the economy.

"It was an example of shameful leadership as Abdul Rahim made those accusations from abroad where the Prime Minister had no means to defend himself."

In Penang, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Mohd Shariff Omar said Abdul Rahim should have issued statements from within the country and not from abroad.

Sharrif who is the Umno Liaison Committee acting chairman, said the sacking of Rahim from the party by Umno Supreme Council last night would not destabilise the Youth movement in the State.

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