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Hishammuddin

UMNO YOUTH "SUPPORT M'SIA" SECRETARIAT TO BE PERMANENT FEATURE

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 9 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth said it will turn the "Support Malaysia" secretariat that it initiated last month into a permanent institution to gather public feedback on current issues.

Movement acting chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said today the secretariat, located at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), will operate during office hours.

"It will entertain telephone calls and gather information from the public wishing to express views and also those displeased with us," he told a press conference after chairing an Umno Youth executive committee meeting here.

The secretariat was originally meant to run a "Support Malaysia" signature campaign and take calls from Malaysians infuriated by United States vice president Al Gore's remarks last month supporting the so-called movement for reform which had been holding anti-government demonstrations here since last September.

Gore's remarks and those of currency speculator George Soros on Malaysia obviously did not reflect the views of the majority of the people in the west and the US about the country, he said.

Hishammuddin said both Gore and Soros made those remarks for selfish ends while exposing their own ignorance about the situation in Malaysia.

Last week while promoting his latest book at a Washington university, Soros called for the removal of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the release of former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who is currently on trial for corruption.

"Soros for instance had acknowledged that he in fact did not understand the social situation in Malaysia and the impact of his statements," said Hishammuddin.

As far as the Umno Youth was concerned, Hishammuddin said both Gore and Soros are hypocrites.

Today's meeting decided that Umno Youth would help the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition in facing the impending Sabah state election including organising state-level leadership camps and conducting "poll dry-runs".

Hishammuddin also said that in the recent campaign Umno Youth alone collected more than 70,000 signatures, not to mention the youth wings of the other BN component parties.

The meeting also discussed the hosting of the East Asian Young Leaders Conference here from Feb 22-27 next year.

About young leaders from 12 participating and 12 observer nations will be attending.

-- BERNAMA

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