

05/09/1998

Youth wing denies its people were involved in incident

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Umno Youth said today its members did not jeer at the supreme council members at the party headquarters as they were leaving the building after the five-hour meeting last night.

Umno Youth executive council member Zulkifli Mohamed Alwi, who is also Barisan Nasional Youth secretary, said the movement was saddened by the incident.

He said the crowd, which turned rowdy when supreme council members were leaving the Umno headquarters, were mostly outsiders.

The crowd had gathered at the Umno headquarters at Menara Datuk Onn where the supreme council meeting, which decided to expel Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as party member, took place.

"We do not want the Pemuda (Umno Youth) to be dragged into yesterday's incident.

"We had absolutely no part in it," he told a Press conference which was also attended by another Youth exco member Zein Isma Ismail.

"We are afraid that the entire Umno Youth will be implicated in yesterday's (rowdy) incident just because one or two of our members might have been involved," he said, adding that even if a few members were involved it was done in their personal capacity.

Zulkifli reiterated the movement's support and loyalty for Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the movement hoped Youth chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi would convene an exco meeting soon to discuss the matter.

After the supreme council meeting ended around 12.30am, groups of people started throwing objects like empty mineral water bottles, crumpled paper and cigarette packets and were making verbal abuse as the supreme council members made their way out of the Putra World Trade Centre.

They were also shouting slogans and singing patriotic songs.

"We believe that most of them who were involved in the incident were party supporters, members of youth organisations, non-governmental organisations and undergraduates. But Pemuda has nothing to do with it," Zulkifli said.

Zulkifli said he was sad as many of those involved in the incident were youths who were the future party leaders.

"These youths must accept that we have a judicial system.

"Let it decide and act on the allegations (against Anwar) and let's not get carried away," he said, adding that the undergraduates must not forget that the Government had provided them with financial assistance to pursue their education.

He said the kurang ajar culture among such youths must be curbed before it got out of control.

Zulkifli said if there were attempts by any party to use the undergraduates to topple the country's leadership as was the case in Indonesia during President Suharto's reign, Umno Youth would strongly oppose it.

"We must never forget the good deeds and contributions of the leadership and party elders," he said.

He said the foreign media had also taken the opportunity to manipulate the issue to discredit the country's leaders.

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