

09 NOV 1999

Youth-Debate

BN YOUTH CHALLENGES OPPOSITION YOUTH LEADERS TO DEBATE

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 9 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional Youth leaders today challenged their counterparts in the four opposition parties calling themselves the Alternative Front to an open debate on current issues, especially political issues.

Barisan Nasional (BN) Youth leader Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said it was time for the young leaders of BN to face the young leaders in the opposition in a debate for the future of the country and the generations to come.

"We hope the young leaders of the Alternative Front will not waver over this and will accept our challenge to a debate," he said after chairing the BN Youth committee meeting at the Putra World Trade Centre, here.

He said the debate would cover matters relating to the race, religion and country and the rule of law.

Hishammuddin said he would lead the BN team together with four representatives from the main BN components -- Umno, MCA, MIC and Gerakan.

He also said that today's meeting agreed to select Umno Youth executive committee member Datuk Wan Ahmad Farid Wan Salleh, MCA Youth head Datuk Ong Tee Kiat, MIC Youth head T. Muthiah and Gerakan Youth Teng Chang Yeow for the debate.

Asked whether the debate would be telecast live over television, he said the matter had not been decided and the details would be finalised by the debate secretariat chaired by Umno Youth executive committee member Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir itu.

Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob was reported yesterday as saying that Umno leaders were prepared to debate with any opposition leaders to uphold justice.

Meanwhile, in ALOR SETAR, PAS Youth leader Mahfuz Oman said the movement's leaders were willing to debate with the Umno leaders on any issue.

He told Bernama that PAS Youth had sought a debate with Hishammuddin, the acting Umno Youth head, for a long time but had yet to receive an official reply.

With Khalil's statement, PAS Youth would follow up the matter with Umno Youth so that the debate suggested by PAS could be held, now that Umno had given the green light, he said.

Mahfuz said PAS was also willing to abide by the conditions stipulated by Khalil.

"We are prepared to hold the debate at the Putra World Trade Centre, which is also the Umno headquarters...in fact we are willing even if all those present are Umno members.

"If they are prepared to debate over television, we will agree but it must be telecast live so that the people can assess the points raised," he said.

However, the debaters must be of the same rank, he said, adding that if Umno sent its president, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, then PAS would also send its president, Datuk Fadzil Noor.

-- BERNAMA

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