

07 JAN 1999

Rahim-Reaction

UMNO YOUTH RESPECTS RAHIM'S RESIGNATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth said today the resignation of Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor showed that he is a responsible person.

Its acting chief, Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, said, however, that the resignation should not spark a round of finger-pointing and hurling of accusations because the police institution should be respected.

Hishammuddin was asked to comment on Abdul Rahim's resignation during a breaking of fast with some 100 orphans and the handicapped at the Central Market, here, today.

Abdul Rahim, in his statement announcing his resignation effective tomorrow, said he took full responsibility for the injuries suffered by former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim while in police custody.

Hishammuddin said that as a normal human being, one could not escape from making mistakes and when the person was holding a position, he must be fully be accountable for the tasks he undertook.

"... The movement leaves the matter to the leadership, especially Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, but at the same time I would like to remind everyone that the police's credibility, ability and integrity should always be defended and protected," he said.

Hishammuddin said Umno Youth had all this while subscribed to the principle that no one was above the law.

"Umno Youth and I only want to see the existence of justice ...we welcome the probe to reveal the truth."

"I hope all parties will be rational over this issue. Let us not accuse each other but those who are guilty should be exposed. This is our principle," he said.

He said the police's role in ensuring the nation's peace and harmony could not be disputed.

Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang said Abdul Rahim's resignation did not address the real issue as to the identity of the culprits responsible for Anwar's injuries.

He said public confidence would suffer another grievous blow if Malaysians and the international community were made to feel that Abdul Rahim's resignation was just an excuse for a cover-up and the ending of all investigations into the assault.

Lim said the first step towards the restoration of public confidence in the institutions of the government in Malaysia was for the prime minister to announce the establishment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry.

He said the opposition should be consulted on the composition of the commission so that its membership could command undoubted national and international respect and acceptability.

Meanwhile, Suara Rakyat Malaysia (Suaram) coordinator Elizabeth Wong said other police officers involved in the assault, including those who had acted to suppress such information, should be charged and brought to court immediately.

Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM) president Dr Syed Husin Ali said Abdul Rahim's resignation was a victory for justice.

He said Dr Mahathir must now give an assurance that the persons who inflicted the injuries on Anwar would be identified, brought to court and duly punished.

In KOTA BAHARU, Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said Rahim should not have resigned as this could affect public confidence in the police force.

"Since he has resigned, the public will say the police are fully responsible for what happened to Anwar," he told reporters after breaking fast with Kelantan police personnel here.

Nik Aziz, however, said that the decision was Rahim's and could have been taken after careful consideration.

-- BERNAMA

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