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Umno-Fire

UM, UPM FIRES REFLECT EXTREMISM TREND IN VARSITIES, SAYS UMNO YOUTH

JOHOR BAHRU, July 1 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth views seriously the two fire incidents at Universiti Malaya and Universiti Putra Malaysia within 24 hours, fuelling fears that extremism had crept into the universities' campus.

Its assistant secretary Zulkifli Alwi said the movement wants the authorities to conduct thorough investigations into the fires to determine if there was a mastermind behind the incidents.

"If there is an element of arson, we want stern action to be taken against those responsible as we do not want such incidents to be an extreme political trend of certain groups," he told reporters after opening "A Day With Timenet", a telecommunication and computer company in Permas Jaya here today.

Zulkifli said Umno Youth was closely monitoring the extremism trend perpetuated by a certain group aimed at undermining the country's political stability and peace.

"Previously, they have been cursing and insulting the country's leadership, holding street demonstrations and now, if this is what they are propagating, I'm afraid Umno Youth can no longer remain silent," he said.

Fire gutted the historic Dewan Tunku Canselor at Universiti Malaya on Friday, on the eve of a symposium to be attended by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and several government leaders.

The 3am blaze destroyed 80 per cent of the huge hall used for UM's convocations, furniture, sound systems and about 1,800 graduands' robes and 2,000 mortar boards. Damage was estimated at RM12.4 million.

Yesterday, the information room in the Mathematics Department of the Environmental Science Faculty of universiti Putra Malaysia in Serdang was destroyed in a fire at about 5.10pm.

The room contained computer systems and servers that operate round-the-clock.

The cause of the two fires are being investigated.

Zulkifli said Umno Youth leaders had so far been able to pacify the members from retaliating but if the trouble makers resorted to extreme actions, it would be difficult for the movement's leadership to control the members' anger.

"I'm not accusing anyone with regard to the fires but I'm asking opposition parties to adopt a more matured attitude and think of the rights of Malaysians who wanted a peaceful and calm life," he said.

Earlier, in his speech, Zulkifli said Umno Youth would soon use Information Technology to communicate with more than 850,000 of its members when all of them have e-mail addresses.

He was happy that the Tebrau Umno division had taken the initiative to bring the members, both at division and branch levels, closer to computers and its application as was done in today's "A Day With Timenet" function.

He hoped other divisions would emulate the move.

After having acquired the skills to use the Internet, Umno Youth members would emerge as the heroes to counter immediately allegations and slanders posted on the Internet by the opposition against Umno besides giving the accurate explanation on certain issues.

"In the cyber war era now, we cannot afford to allow the opposition from hurling all sorts of slanders against Umno and the country's leaders by a handful of committed opposition members," he added.

-- BERNAMA
MNY TS