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Umno to consider Azim's positions

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Umno will consider if Datuk Abdul Azim Mohd Zabidi can keep his positions as supreme council member and Bank Simpanan Nasional chairman after he was stripped of his post as Bukit Bintang divisional chief.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he would have to study the matter as it involved Umno constitution and rules.

"It is a party matter, not a government matter," he said in reference to Abdul Azim's post as BSN chairman.

"If he had misused government funds, it would be a different matter."

The Prime Minister said he had to "think hard" about this.

The Umno disciplinary board announced yesterday that Abdul Azim was among the eight divisional and branch leaders stripped of their posts for offences relating to money politics.

On Kuantan Umno chief Datuk Fauzi Abdul Rahman's comment that more people should have been punished over his complaint, Dr Mahathir said he did not know the details of that case.

"I am a simple-minded man," he said.

Fauzi had said he was surprised that only the division vice-chairman Datuk Faisal Abdullah was implicated.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir launched the Umno Cheras education foundation which was set up last September to carry out an "Adopt a school" programmes.

It has "adopted" 19 schools in the Cheras and Federal Territory parliament area, involving 18,000 pupils and 1,000 teachers.

The foundation, headed by Umno Cheras division chief Datuk Syed Ali Alhabshee, also gave financial aid to needy students. Dr Mahathir presented scholarships to 226 students today.

Syed Ali said the foundation had received donations totalling RM1 million. Among them were RM100,000 from Apex Communications Sdn Bhd and RM150,000 from Effective Capital Sdn Bhd.

Dr Mahathir commended the foundation for its good work, saying it had become a culture in Malaysia to set up charitable organisations.

"It is good to be generous when you are rich. There are always rich and poor people. But people should not think that being poor is good because it shows that you are not greedy.

He hoped Malaysians would appreciate the many opportunities for higher education, adding that the Government was concerned that many young people, especially boys, were not interested in studies.

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