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Hishammuddin-Debate

UMNO YOUTH PLANS TO POSTPONE DEBATE WITH PAS YOUTH

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 4 (Bernama) -- Umno Youth head Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein has proposed that the debate on special Malay priveleges with PAS Youth leader Mahfuz Omar be postponed temporarily.

He said the debate was not appropriate at the moment, when Umno Youth was endeavouring to press the Malaysian Chinese Organisations Election Appeals Committee (Suqiu) to drop their demands pertaining to special Malay priveleges.

"It's not proper and not nice for two young Malay leaders to debate openly in public on the matter while we are championing the issue.

"It will only show that we are acting irresponsibly especially when there are certain quarters trying to unite the Malays," he said in an interview in the Umno-Online website today.

Hishammuddin, who is also Youth and Sports Minister, said he would inform debate moderator Royal Prof Ungku Aziz to postpone the debate with Mahfuz if the theme for the debate was on special Malay priveleges.

The 17-Point Appeal raised by Suqiu had become controversial as it also demanded that the special Malay priveleges be abolished.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had described the group as extremists for making demands which could affect the existing social contract between the communities and harmony prevailing in the country since independence.

Subsequently, the Federation of Peninsular Malay Students (GPMS) made 100 counter demands and planned to hold protest gatherings in every state and a protest gathering of 100,000 people at the Bukit Jalil National Stadium.

Hishammuddin had also stated his willingness to hold a dialogue with the Suqiu to end the controversy as soon as possible.

He said for the new year, Umno Youth would open a new chapter in its struggles and would not be engage in any polemics with anyone making criticism against the movement in the interest of the religion, race and country.

Meanwhile, Mahfuz said he intended to proceed with the debate with Hishammuddin and urged that the debate on the special Malay priveleges be held immediately.

He said the debate aimed to clarify to the people on the special position of the Malays.

He said Ungku Aziz had already fixed the date for the debate between Jan 13 and Feb 24.

"Hishamuddin should not dilly dally anymore. He should come forward to demonstrate that he is a responsible leader," he said.

Mahfuz said Hishammuddin's excuse had nothing to do with the Suqiu which had stated their agreement to Article 153 of the Federal Constitution on the special Malay priveleges all this while.

-- BERNAMA

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