

18 JUN 2003

Umno-Hishammuddin (Education)

NEW APPROACH TO REINFORCE NATIONAL SCHOOLS - HISHAMMUDDIN

KUALA LUMPUR, June 18 (Bernama) -- The Umno Youth will initiate efforts to restore public awareness on the need to send their children to national schools, said the movement's chief Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein.

He urged all parties to cooperate with the government to make the national school concept the first choice education system for all communities to forge unity and achieve excellence.

"National education stream must be reinforced, equipped, updated and improved to make it the first choice for every levels of the society," Hishammuddin said in his keynote address at the Umno Youth conference held in conjunction with the 57th Umno General Assembly here today.

To ensure success for this noble aspiration, a new approach was needed in terms of finances, manpower, curriculum and infrastructures, he said.

The Umno Youth conference, attended by 653 delegates, was simultaneously opened with the Wanita and Puteri Umno conferences by Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi last night.

He said focus should also be given on improving teachers' skills and facilities at national schools apart from drawing out a curriculum which met globalisation demands.

Hishammuddin said this in his speech themed "Bersatu, Bersedia Mempertahankan Kuasa Bangsa ("United, Ready To Defend The Race's Domination").

"We wish to see a national school which can carry the true aspiration of the Malaysian Race and able to imprint accurate and actual meaning of citizenship in the mind of every students.

"The (Umno) Youth is aware that there are other races in the country who are serious in their own community's education. They managed to draw attention from various parties to support their schooling system and they have managed to collect funds to set up their own university," he said.

He said the Malays should emulate this attitude and commitment in the efforts to beef up the national school concept.

He said the movement hoped the national schools would not only develop into institutions of academic excellence but also the stage for character building.

Hishammuddin said Umno should not only be synonymous with protecting Malay rights but also with the efforts to improve excellence and competitiveness of the Malays.

He said there were various challenges which forced the Malays to change their mindset to move the race to a higher platform, he said.

"Umno must reunite the whole of the Malay race. Umno must be closer to the people, become their friends, assist them to create a line of individuals who are not only independent but willing to work hard," he said.

On the Umno leadership transition, Hishammuddin said the party had leaders capable of giving priority to the interest of the party and nation.

This was reflected by the continuity in party tradition by Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who named his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as his successor, said Hishammuddin.

"Umno Youth's task is to shoulder the trust and confidence of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir. The movement upholds the party tradition by supporting this leadership transition," he said.

-- BERNAMA

MS KHY RON ZUL