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Umno Youth bureau head urges deputy minister to resign

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Umno Youth international bureau head Dr Shamsul Anwar Sulaiman has asked Culture, Arts and Tourism Deputy Minister Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen to resign over the controversy of her now-revoked Australian permanent resident status.

In what is seen as the strongest criticism yet against Dr Ng from a Barisan Nasional leader, Shamsul said the move was necessary to protect the MCA's and BN's interests.

"This is necessary for us to face the next general election. We don't want the Opposition to make use of this," he said in an interview in TV3's current affairs Analisis programme last night.

By being a PR of another country, he said one would give the impression that he or she was not loyal to the country.

Shamsul, who is also Umno Youth executive council member, added that national leaders usually knew classified information about the country but the confidentiality could be compromised if one was a PR.

Dr Ng had recently admitted to being an Australian PR when she was sworn in as a Senator in 1993, but had given it up two years later.

The Wanita MCA head had said the PR status was to facilitate her frequent travels to the country where her three children were studying.

A Pas leader from Pahang had also asked Dr Ng to resign while Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim had said Dr Ng's action, although legally allowed, was morally wrong.

The MCA Raub division had passed a resolution asking Dr Ng who is also Raub MP, not to contest in the constituency in the next general election.

Meanwhile, Universiti Malaya lecturer Prof Datuk Dr Firdaus Abdullah who was also interviewed in the same programme, said it was morally wrong for a leader to be a PR of another country.

"This will raise questions about a person's loyalty. The Government should ask any leader who is a PR of another country to own up," said the former UM deputy vice-chancellor.

MCA Youth head Datuk Ong Tee Keat, another personality interviewed, said it was up to Dr Ng whether to resign but added that her Deputy Minister's post could also be decided by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Ong, who had dropped hints about Dr Ng's status before the media broke the story last month, said the issue only surfaced now because no one knew that Dr Ng was a PR before this.