

Anti-UUCA protest to go on if MB does not retract
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S Pathmawathy

Solidariti Mahasiswa Malaysia (SMM) will not withdraw the ultimatum it issued to Kedah Menteri Besar Azizan Abdul Razak until Azizan retracts his statements supporting the much-criticised Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA).

Azizan was hauled up before the PAS central committee last weekend to clarify his statements seemingly supportive of UUCA and the Private Higher Education Institute Act 1996 - which sparked outrage among PAS' Pakatan Rakyat coalition partners as well.

"We are still waiting for the menteri besar's response... we were informed that PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang described the discussions as positive," SMM president Syukri Abd Razab said yesterday.

The coalition of more than a dozen students groups has vowed to go ahead with its mass rally on Sunday in front of the state secretariat building in Alor Star if there was no positive response from Azizan.

Syukri said Azizan "does not even have to apologise". He only has to fulfill SMM's "simple request" by making a retraction and immediately lifting the suspension order on the Kolej Universiti Insaniah (Kuin) undergraduates who was suspended for two semesters.

Azizan, who is the chairperson of the state-governed higher learning institution, refused to withdraw Kuin's suspension orders against the five students who had objected to the use of one of their residential college buildings by Quran studies students in April last year.

He has defended the suspension order, saying the disciplinary action taken against the students was in accordance with the Private Higher Education Institute Act, not the UUCA.

"He (Azizan) has a few more days to respond, after which we will go ahead with the planned protest," said Syukri.

The five Kuin students who were suspended are Mohd Faiz Mohd Arsyad, Muhamad Aiman Ab Razab, Zuki Latif, Ahmad Remy Mohd Arof dan Mohd Azlan Mat Zin.

Mohd Faiz was booted out for two semesters, which will expire in April, while the rest were suspended for one semester and have since resumed their classes.

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