

Hunt for press secretary who leaked DPM video

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Questions have been raised as to whether a press secretary to a minister was the one responsible for 'leaking' to a blogger the video of Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin speaking frankly on 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) at a closed-door Umno function.

Pro-Barisan Nasional website MyKMU.net said there had been talk that the video clip was given by the minister's press secretary to former New Straits Times editor Firdaus Abdullah.

Firdaus, who is known for his attacks against Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak as of late, had then uploaded the video onto his blog apanama.my.

MyKMU claimed the press secretary in question was often seen to be close to the blogger and his group.

It also said the clip was not given out by Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's press secretary Fadzlette Othman Merican.

"(Umno vice-president) Zahid (photo) now has to take action and investigate which press secretary was involved in this to prevent staff of Umno leaders from splitting the party."

MyKMU had earlier praised Zahid for saying that action will be taken against the Umno deputy division leader who had recorded Muhyiddin's speech.

"The deputy division leader, however, does not know who this 'apanama' or Firdaus is. So who gave the video clip to him (Firdaus)?"

"We are not angry with the contents of Muhyiddin's speech but we are angry with the Umno deputy division leader's action in recording and distributing the video."

Umno vice-president Hishammuddin Hussein's press secretary Fadzli Mohamad Kamal has denied that he had given the video to Firdaus.

"I don't know anything about the video," he told Malaysiakini.

When contacted, Umno vice-president Mohd Shafie Apdal's press secretary Zamri Maulan also denied that he was responsible for handing over the video to Firdaus.

"What's certain is that it definitely wasn't me," he said.

Explanation not acceptable

Shafie, who is also rural and regional development minister, was reported today by The Malaysian Insider as saying that distributing the video was not a criminal offence.

His stance is in contrast with Zahid who said no mercy will be shown to the Umno leader who leaked the video.

Although the guilty Umno leader had explained that he had only circulated the video for consumption of Umno committee members as well as deputy chiefs nationwide, Zahid has said this explanation was unacceptable.

The video in question had attracted much attention as it showed Muhyiddin breaking ranks with Najib in insisting that the debt-ridden 1MDB can no longer be given more time to resolve its problems.

The deputy prime minister called for the sacking of the 1MDB board stressing that it was unacceptable for the company to amass a RM42 billion debt.

He made the comments at a closed-door Umno cadre-ship programme (photo), dubbed 'Keris 2314' in Pahang on May 16.

It was uploaded by Firdaus a day before Najib tabled the 11th Malaysia Plan last Thursday.

As a result, the video overshadowed Najib's presentation in Parliament as Muhyiddin was hounded for answers. He subsequently confirmed the authenticity of the recording but said the views therein were his personal ones.

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