

'No boos, just applause for Najib's speech'

MalaysiaKini.com

Dec 9th, 2015

Kow Gah Chie

Umno delegates received well and applauded Prime Minister and Umno president Najib Abdul Razak's speech at the party's presidential briefing held tonight, supreme council member Abdul Rahman Dahlan said.

Among others, he said Najib addressed the controversial 1MDB affair and the RM2.6 billion donation issue besides rebutting ex-premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad's contention that Malaysians would risk being beggars if Najib stayed on in his position.

"I am happy with the situation as it has showed that the president spoke on issues that were on the mind of the delegates," said Rahman Dahlan who is also BN's strategic communications director.

"He straight away entered fifth gear from the first minute he spoke, no rhetoric at all. This showed that he wants the issues resolved as soon as possible," he told the press after the briefing concluded.

The delegates also seemed to have accepted Najib's speech from the body language they displayed, he added.

"The president also responded to Mahathir's statement (last night) that Malaysians would become beggars and the nation's alleged weakening economy with facts related to shares and foreign investment.

"We were happy that the president made a speech based on facts. There were no boos at all, just applause," he said.

"That was what they (the delegates) wanted [...] they wanted the premier to answer it in a good way," he said.

"I know that I can sleep well tonight as everything will go on smoothly," said Rahman Dahlan referring to the Umno general assembly which formally opens later today.

Deputy Prime Minister and Umno vice-president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said that Najib explained both the 1MDB and donation issues.

"He said the donor did not ask anything in return for the donation," said Zahid.

"Any party would need funds and this is a tool and not a purpose," he added.

"He also spoke of the MACC who have come to know about the donor and a statement was made," he said.

'Flushed himself out'

Zahid also said Najib explained that 1MDB sold its energy assets to a foreign consortium as the offer given by Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) was lower.

"TNB was rejected as its offer was lower. It would have been a bailout if TNB was given a chance but the foreign bidder offered a higher price," he said.

Umno minister Azalina Said Ohman, meanwhile, challenged those who continued to harp on issues that have been answered repeatedly to quit.

"(Najib is a) true leader. He spoke through the platform for the party, he was explaining again and again on the allegations," she said.

"Therefore for those who still question, I challenge them to resign from the party and also resign as lawmaker [...] I think they should be brave enough," she said.

When met, Umno supreme council leader Ahmad Shabeery Cheek said Muhyiddin's absence was as if he had flushed himself out of Umno's system.

"This was his choice. He failed to take the chance to be with Umno members (to listen to his explanation).

"He has got himself out of Umno system and it is a loss to him," he said.

He also explained that the media had always been barred from covering the presidential briefing ever since Dr Mahathir Mohamad 's time.

"It is always like that, this is part of the tradition," he said.