

Mukhriz's case closed

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Hisham: Umno Youth accepts his explanation

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Umno Youth executive committee has accepted the explanation and "sincere apology" of Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir over the controversial remarks he made about Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's policy speech at the recent Umno general assembly.

Its chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said that Umno Youth would also arrange for Mukhriz to meet Abdullah.

Hishammuddin, however, declined to elaborate on the explanation given by Mukhriz at the Umno Youth executive committee meeting yesterday, but said the issue was now closed.

"There is no need to look at the past because we have accepted it with a condition, a warning," he told reporters

after the meeting.

Hishammuddin said all members, including Mukhriz, had been given a "stern and tough" warning not to repeat what he had done, which was to go against the party leadership.

"He (Mukhriz) has said in public that he regretted his comments and did not intend to offend anyone, but we felt he owed us a more lengthy explanation since he is an exco member," he said.

Mukhriz caused a stir at the assembly when he told reporters that Abdullah's speech was similar to what the party president delivered the previous year and offered nothing new.

Hishammuddin said the executive committee members, including Mukhriz, agreed that what he had done was wrong.

"We take this as a lesson not only for Mukhriz but all of us," said the Umno Youth chief who added that the movement's leaders and executive commit-

tee must bear in mind that they were not ordinary members but office bearers.

Hishammuddin also said that there was no need for Mukhriz, Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaluddin or other exco members to speak on the

issue any more, but stressed that this was not a gag order.

Later, Mukhriz told reporters that he had taken some time to issue an apology over his statement against Abdullah because he had been asked to give an explanation to Umno Youth.

He declined to comment when asked if he had consulted his father over the issue or if he now could no longer speak in defence of Dr Mahathir.

Mukhriz, however, said that he was not pressured by Umno Youth.