

Umno Youth accepts Mukhriz's explanation and apology

The Sun
12/12/2007

KUALA LUMPUR: The Umno Youth exco unanimously accepted exco member Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir's explanation and apology yesterday over his remark that there was nothing new in the presidential address at the party's recent general assembly.

The movement's chief, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, said Mukhriz had offered the apology during the exco meeting yesterday and the exco will arrange for him to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"Mukhriz has made himself clear and we have accepted his explanation. Now it is important for him to explain himself to the party president. He has agreed to meet him and we will arrange for that," he said.

"They will meet and we will leave the rest to him and the prime minister," he said at the Umno headquarters yesterday after the exco meeting which lasted more than three hours.

Mukhriz had earlier issued a two-sentence statement saying he regretted making the remark. However, the exco wanted a more thorough explanation.

Hishammuddin said yesterday he had given all the exco members, including Mukhriz, the space to express their views on the matter and there was no pressure on Mukhriz to apologise.

He also dismissed the notion that no action was taken against Mukhriz because he is the son of a former prime minister.

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"I know our decision today will disappoint those who wanted to see Umno Youth in chaos. But, this is the best decision with respect to our brotherhood spirit and for the sake of the party," he added.

Hishammuddin also said all exco members have been warned not to make the same mistake of making personal comments in public, irrespective of their positions as party leaders.

"Everyone of us agreed what Mukhriz had done was wrong. An offence is an offence. It was an offence because it went against the party's principle, the spirit of responsibility and party regulations.

"Furthermore, it was the Youth delegate who seconded the motion of thanks for the presidential speech," he said, adding that strict action will be

taken against those who repeat the mistake.

On another matter, Hishammuddin said the meeting also discussed the issue of Youth members making extreme comments or speeches during the assembly. One of them, Datuk Azimi Daim, has already met the party's management committee about this.

He said Youth secretary Abdul Rahman Dahlan will make a police report to counter the claims made by other parties, who have been spreading to the public parts of the speeches.

Approached by reporters later, Mukhriz said he agreed with everything Hishammuddin said, and declined to comment further.