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Hisham: Dr M's endorsement of Anwar inconsistent, defies logic

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KOTA BARU: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's endorsement of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as prime minister candidate is "inconsistent and defies logic".

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said for those who stood with Dr Mahathir in the aftermath of Anwar's sacking as deputy prime minister in 1998, the latest about-turn was ironic and detestable.

Hishammuddin said Dr Mahathir convinced party members on the reasons behind the removal.

"When Dr Mahathir decided to sack Anwar, I had to lead Umno Youth. Dr Mahathir had convinced us on the reasons why Anwar cannot be supported.

"We had to put aside our emotions, anger and confusion to support Dr Mahathir as he was party president," Hishammuddin said after opening the Ketereh Umno

Wanita, Youth and Puteri delegates meeting here yesterday.

Hishammuddin said Dr Mahathir had told Umno Youth leaders then that Anwar was unacceptable as the country's leader due to "morality" issue.



*Khairy
Jamaluddin*

"Has the issue (morality) been taken into consideration? This involves the same man. Why make a U-turn if the main issue remains?"

"If there is a change to the moral issue (raised to sack Anwar), then Dr Mahathir has to convince the people (why he did so then and what has changed today)."

Hishammuddin said issues on Dr Mahathir's U-turn had been relayed through Umno's information programmes to the grassroots.

"What has been said today is not the same as what was said then. The U-turn (by Dr Mahathir) now cannot be accepted."

In **Rembau**, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin said Dr Mahathir's support for Anwar was to ensure the latter would not link him to the Bank Negara Malaysia's foreign exchange losses in the 1980s and 1990s.

Anwar was finance minister from 1993 to 1998 during Dr Mahathir's administration.

"It is the only way to save himself (Dr Mahathir) during investigations under the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) into the central bank's forex losses," Khairy said at his Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house.

Last month, the cabinet had agreed to form the RCI following a recommendation by a special task force led by former chief secretary to the government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan, which probed into the forex losses.

It was also reported that the task force had discovered attempts to conceal facts on the forex losses, with misleading information given to the cabinet and Parliament at that time.