

**Encourage Undergraduates To Join Umno - Wanita Delegate
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 3 (Bernama) -- Umno members at all levels should provide as much opportunities to undergraduates to join the party to give them early exposure to become leaders in future, a Wanita Umno delegate Datuk Hasnah Salam said today.

She said undergraduates should not be perceived as a threat to Umno but should be considered as providers of strength in terms of contributing ideas and resources to bring progress to Umno.

"Let us join the Umno president in encouraging undergraduates to join the party. I call upon all Umno members at all levels to open the door as wide as possible to the undergraduates at the branch and divisional levels.

"Understand their sentiments so that they will later appreciate the Umno struggles." she said when seconding the motion on religion, social and education at the Umno General Assembly 2011, here today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is also the Umno president, had announced on Nov 24 that the government would amend Section 15 of the Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA) 1974 to enable undergraduates, upon reaching the age of 21, to join political parties.

In supporting the motion, Kelantan Umno proposed that the National Wasatiyyah (moderation) Understanding Seminar held in conjunction with the Umno General Assembly 2011 to be extended to the party's state and divisional levels as well as government departments and agencies.

Its delegate, Mohd Afandi Yusoff said the seminar would be able to enlighten the people on who actually defended and fought for Islam.

"Our struggle has always been consistent and we have a stand ... we are firm in fighting for the race and religion.

"We are always ahead of PAS who only now realised that power-sharing is allowed in Islam as the Prophet has done it before.

"This shows they are lagging behind... they used to pursue the Islamic state but has somewhat changed it to a welfare state. This indicates that they constantly change their istiqamah (steadfastness) and stand," he said.

Federal Territories delegate Rizalman Mokhtar, who supported the motion, proposed that the Education Ministry set up the primary religious school, Sekolah Kebangsaan Agama.

Rizalman, who is the Bandar Tun Razak Umno Youth chief, said this would avoid parents from enrolling their children in private or unregistered religious schools.

"These children studied at private or unregistered religious primary schools before

continuing their studies at Sekolah Menengah Agama run by the government.

"Although we do not intend to belittle the contribution played by Sekolah Agama Rakyat, Sekolah Agama Negeri and Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan, the setting up of Sekolah Kebangsaan Agama by the government would make the religious education under the Education Ministry complete," he added.

Johor delegate Mohd Tahir Mohd Taat proposed that the government sets up polytechnics in all districts in the country to churn out skilled and trained manpower with the ability to compete.

He said this would have a significant impact to the higher education sector in the country in line with the efforts to create human capital of quality.

"Statistics showed that as of 2010, about 180,000 students who had completed the SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia) and STPM (Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia) could not get a place to study at any institutions of higher learning," said Mohd Tahir, who is the deputy head of the Pagoh Umno division.

Perlis delegate Fathul Bari Mat Jahya said the process of tasfyiah (purification) and tarbiah (education outreach) in Umno and the government should be carried out to ensure Barisan Nasional's victory in the next general election.

He said the tasfyiah process was necessary as Umno leaders and members were more inclined to pursue worldly goods such as craving for positions and enriching themselves rather than championing the religion and race.

The tarbiah process included rebutting slanders hurled by the opposition who claimed that Umno and the Barisan Nasional government did not want to implement hudud, the Islamic law, he added.

Fathul Bari said Umno leaders and members, under the education outreach process, should be able to explain to the people on the party's efforts and successes in upholding religion and developing the people.

"We need to answer and communicate with knowledge as we are tired of hearing PAS hitting out at us using verses from the Quran at their whims and fancy," he said.

Pahang delegate Datuk Mohamad Sahfri Abd Aziz said the government should revamp the school curriculum, teacher recruitment process and school facilities as well as provide an additional allocation to strengthen the religious education system.

"We want young doctors, lawyers and accountants, who are pious as this will enable them to help develop the country with a strong foundation in Islam," he said when supporting the motion.

Mohamad Sahfri commended the federal government for allocating nearly RM1 billion for Islamic administration in the country.

Negeri Sembilan delegate Mustapha Nagoor, on the other hand, proposed that the government gives additional allowance to teachers in remote areas.

"The additional allowance will definitely ease their burden and become a morale booster for

them to stay and continue teaching our children in such areas," he said when debating the motion.

Mustapa also called on the Education Department to take stern action against teachers with disciplinary problems.

"The ministry should not hesitate to take action against these problematic teachers because it reflects the discipline and integrity of civil servants," he explained.

Mustapa also urged the government to review the foreign student intake policy in this country as social problems involving foreign students had become rampant.

"We support the effort to internationalise education in Malaysia, but too many problems had been caused by these foreign students of late. It was also reported that 75 per cent of Internet scam cases involved the students from Africa," he said.

Puteri Umno Sabah delegate Dayang Maimunah Sidek proposed the setting up of a one-stop centre in all states to assist National Higher Education Fund Corporation's (PTPTN) borrowers to repay their loans.

"The initiative could help ease the burden of young borrowers who do not have sufficient savings to settle their debts.

"The one-stop centre can assist 69,573 PTPTN defaulters who are facing court action, 8,143 who are blacklisted and 132,801 who are barred from travelling overseas," she said when debating the motion.

Dayang Maimunah, who is also Sabah Puteri chief, said the effort would prove that the government was not cruel and was concerned about the problems faced by young people.

She also proposed that the government reviewed nursing courses at institutions of higher learning as over 8,000 nursing graduates were unemployed.

Perak delegate Mohammad Annuar Ariffin said the decision to amend the Universities and University Colleges Act proved that the Barisan Nasional-led government understood the aspiration of university students.

He said the amendment also proved that the government was always committed in making changes in the political arena and in reaching out to university students through a legal channel.

"Umno is doing this because we understand the growing trend among the students and unlike PAS and PKR, we understand the laws and we know we cannot penetrate into universities at our whims and fancy," he said.

Selangor delegate Datuk Zainal Abidin Sakom urged Umno leaders and members to emulate the leadership qualities and traits of former prime minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, who always placed the interests of the country above himself.

Zainal said Razak, who was the father of current prime minister, Najib, concealed his ailment from the knowledge of his family and the people for the sake of the country.

"Many people had thought that it was Tun Razak's style to wear a bush jacket and walked

with the aid of a walking stick. Actually, he was hiding his pain until he breathed his last.

"Even his wife and children did not know about it except for his doctor. He was a noble man. Maybe if he had told Toh Puan Rahah (Mohd Noah) (his wife), he would not have been allowed to go out," said Zainal when supporting the motion.

He said Razak also showed his sincerity by dismantling the National Operations Council, which run the country after the May 13, 1969 disturbance, to enable the country to return to democracy as he could have continued ruling the country under the emergency powers.

Now, said Zainal, it was time for his son, Najib and other leaders to play an important role in transforming the government and leading Umno for another term.

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