

**Umno Supreme Council Makes Decision On Anwar Overture For Dialogue -  
Hishammuddin  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 30 (Bernama) -- The Umno Supreme Council, at its meeting Friday, made a collective decision on the overture by Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to have an open dialogue with the government to discuss "national issues" that he felt should be handled in the spirit of Merdeka.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, in disclosing this, said the council's decision would have to be announced by Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"... a collective decision was made but because the (Umno) president had to rush to Melaka we did not have a press conference. It's inappropriate for me to say (anything about it)," Hishammuddin told reporters after the meeting at Menara Dato Onn, here.

Najib, who is the prime minister, had gone to Melaka to attend the national-level Aidilfitri open house at the Hang Tuah Stadium, scheduled for 8.30 pm.

A web portal reported Friday that Anwar, who is also PKR advisor, had proposed an open dialogue with the government to discuss "national issues" which should be tackled in the spirit of Merdeka.

He had said, nevertheless, that the call for the dialogue was not the same as the proposal for the establishment of a unity government that had been a hot issue.

Hishammuddin questioned whether the proposal by Anwar was a collective decision of the parties of the opposition pact.

"Ours is a collective decision but, when Anwar made the proposal, was it in terms of collective responsibility?" he asked.

Several other leaders had also questioned the intention of the proposal, one of them being Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Mahathir.

He described Anwar as being "increasingly desperate" in making such a proposal. Saying that there was no urgency to the matter, Mukhriz suggested that Anwar raise the proposal in Parliament if he was really serious about it.

Mukhriz said the government always adopted a reconciliatory stand after elections but this was not welcomed and all kinds of accusations were hurled at it.

"After all the (election) petitions are struck out (by the court), comes this proposal. I feel we cannot accept that," he said.

Puteri Umno chief Datuk Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin questioned Anwar's motive in raising the proposal for dialogue when he had all along rejected overtures for discussion on party and national issues raised several times by Najib.

"I find that it has come a little too late. This issue should have been discussed much earlier.

The opposition brings up matters when it is to their advantage. Otherwise, they will object and give all sorts of reasons.

Parliament was the most appropriate place to discuss important national agendas, she said, adding that the Barisan Nasional had never rejected anything that benefited the party and country.

Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the supreme council meeting discussed three key matters, including the procedure for the party elections.

An explanation was also given on the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), he said, adding that the meeting also discussed the party's daily management problems, including the holding of meetings at the branch level.

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