

Anwar says removal of UMcedel head a 'betrayal of the people'
Malaysian Insider
June 30, 2014

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (pic) today reminded Putrajaya that its forced removal of a renowned professor from Universiti Malaya's Centre for Democracy and Elections (UMcedel) is a "betrayal of the people".

Singling out the two ministers of education, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, the opposition leader said their powers of appointment and dismissal are not absolute.

"I would like to remind them that their powers of appointment and dismissal are not absolute and this latest action is not just a violation of academic freedom but a betrayal of the people's expectations for the enhancement of standards and rankings of our institutions of higher learning," he said in a blog posting today.

He was commenting on the forced resignation of UMcedel head Professor Datuk Dr Mohamad Redzuan Othman, whose tenure as dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in the university was also not renewed.

The Malaysian Insider had reported earlier that his removal as UMcedel's director was because the centre had irked Putrajaya with its various survey findings on Malaysian politics, which had shown the ruling Barisan Nasional in a bad light.

Anwar said this news comes as no surprise in Putrajaya's "terror reign", although it was disappointing and unwarranted.

"This totally uncalled-for dismissal is intended once again to send that chilling message to all academics that their freedom ends when Umno's popularity begins. In this terror reign, freedom to criticise is absolute as long as the targets are leaders of the Pakatan or those groups critical of Umno-BN.

"Swift reckoning will be brought to bear on those who espouse any views or opinions that appear to be critical of Umno, let alone in favour of the opposition," he added.

He also praised Redzuan, whom he said has performed his duties at UMcedel professionally, objectively and independently, adding that the same fate had befallen renowned economist Professor Jomo KS, political scientist Professor Dr P. Ramasamy and constitutional law expert Dr Aziz Bari.

Ramasamy, who is Penang deputy chief minister, was a professor at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, but his contract was terminated in 2005. He has said that his sudden termination was related to his constant criticism of the government on many issues.

Aziz was suspended by the International Islamic University of Malaysia (UIA) after he publicly criticised a decree by the Sultan of Selangor over the controversial Jais raid on the Damansara Utama Methodist Church.

"Today we see it happening to Professor Redzuan who has proven to have performed his academic tasks in a most professional manner in a research area that demands complete objectivity and independence," he said.

"It is obvious that this decision not to renew Professor Redzuan's tenure as the Director of UMCedel is just a backhanded way of sacking him for his courageous stand in carrying out his work without fear or

favour," Anwar said.

Following The Malaysian Insider breaking the news of Redzuan's removal this morning, Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, the former deputy higher education minister, announced that he was quitting as senior research fellow at UM's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, in solidarity with Redzuan.

In a Facebook post today, he confirmed that "certain quarters" from the Education Ministry had pressured Redzuan to quit as UMcedel director. – June 30, 2014.

- See more at:
<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/anwar-says-removal-of-umcedel-head-a-betrayal-of-the-people#sthash.yoCpseo.dpuf>

Hakcipta © 2013 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/anwar-says-removal-of-umcedel-head-a-betrayal-of-the-people>