

Najib must now expel Muhyiddin to stop Umno revolt, say former ministers

The Malaysian Insider

July 30, 2015

By Md Izwan

Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak has no choice but to sack his deputy Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin if he wishes to consolidate his position, former Umno ministers said.

Despite Najib stripping Muhyiddin of his Cabinet post, the deputy Umno president still wielded power in the party and had leeway under the party constitution to mount a challenge against Najib, former minister Tan Sri Zainuddin Maidin said.

And Najib would have to move fast, as pressure mounts following a leaked video clip appeared to show Muhyiddin telling of the prime minister's admission to having US\$700 million (RM2.67 billion) deposited into his personal bank accounts.

"The first step Najib will take is to remove him as deputy president," Zainuddin told The Malaysian Insider.

Muhyiddin was dropped as deputy prime minister and education minister in Tuesday's cabinet reshuffle, which saw Najib purge those who had openly questioned him on his handling of debt-ridden state investment firm 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

Also axed was Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal. Both, however, remain in their party positions.

Zainuddin (pic, left) said Muhyiddin, as Umno deputy president, can use the party constitution to call an extraordinary general assembly (EGM) if he wishes to challenge Najib.

He said this would need the support of two-thirds of the Supreme Council's 25 members.

"Muhyiddin still has some power if he can get two-thirds of the Supreme Council to agree to an extraordinary general meeting," said the former information minister, noting that the party constitution allowed this.

Article 9.12 of the Umno constitution states that any member of the Supreme Council, including the president and the deputy president, can be stripped of his position, while the council itself can be dissolved through a two-thirds majority vote at an extraordinary general assembly (EGM).

Zainuddin said as long Muhyiddin remained the Umno deputy president, he still had authority under the party constitution, and as such Najib would have to act fast to preempt his party deputy.

Another former minister, Datuk Zaid Ibrahim (pic, right), believed that Najib would move quickly to eliminate his critics soon.

"Najib will sack Muhyiddin anyway he can. The party's rules won't stop him. In Umno, the president has all the power and no one is above him," said the lawyer.

Meanwhile, an Umno Youth leader said Najib was safe now as there was no open revolt among the grassroots over his decision to sack Muhyiddin and Shafie from the government.

"Right now Najib is comfortable, there is no clear revolt. Many are still brown-nosing him, in fact, the Supreme Council has already expressed its support for him.

"That's why he's so confident with the decision he made," the youth leader who requested anonymity told The Malaysian Insider.

Zainuddin said he expected Najib to strip Muhyiddin of his party post at the Supreme Council meeting scheduled tomorrow.

The meeting, however, was abruptly cancelled in a notice yesterday signed by Umno secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, without giving any reason.

Other party figures told The Malaysian Insider that the meeting was likely cancelled to avoid heated debates arising from Muhyiddin's sacking.

Before the cancellation, Muhyiddin himself told reporters yesterday that his position as party deputy president was secure.

"I don't feel as though I am barred and I am not worried about attending (the meeting) because those in the Supreme Council are experienced, open leaders and will give room for everyone to air their views," he said.

Hours after Muhyiddin spoke to the press, a video of him recounting a confrontation he had with Najib over the money in his bank accounts was leaked.

The allegation that US\$700 million from 1MDB-linked firms went to Najib's accounts was first made by The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) on July 2, citing documents from Malaysian investigators.

Najib has publicly denied taking money for personal gain although he has not directly addressed the fund transfers to his accounts. – July 30, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/najib-must-now-expel-muhyi>

[ddin-to-stop-umno-revolt-say-former-ministers](#)