

## **Umno will be weakened if Muhyiddin, Shafie sacked, says veteran leader**

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**By Nabihah Hamid**

Umno will grow weaker if it sacks deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal at its highly anticipated Supreme Council meeting tomorrow, says veteran leader Tan Sri Sanusi Junid.

The former Kedah menteri besar said the reasons for sacking them were weak and would anger the grassroots who still supported the duo.

"Umno will be weaker because every leader has followers, supporters, friends and relatives.

"And if the sacking happens, it will be over differences of opinion. That means only yes-men would be left," Sanusi told The Malaysian Insider.

He was responding to rumours that Muhyiddin, Shafie and five other Umno leaders would be expelled from the party during the long-delayed meeting of the party's highest decision-making body tomorrow.

Sanusi said anything could happen, now that the Malay ruling party was struggling with numerous problems.

"It all depends on speculation, interests and the thinking of the leaders."

He added that if the both men were sacked, it would mean Umno leaders were afraid of them and were not thinking the issue through.

"It means the leaders do not have a long-term strategy and only know 'panic management'," said Sanusi, who was Umno secretary-general and vice-president during Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's time.

A message circulating on WhatsApp is claiming that Muhyiddin and Shafie, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, Datuk Abdul Aziz Sheikh Fadzir, Datuk Seri Ahmad Said, Datuk Hamidah Osman and Datuk Jumat Idris will be axed from Umno in tomorrow's meeting.

Those on the list have been vocal in demanding more answers regarding the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) saga from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

In a Cabinet reshuffle on July 28, Muhyiddin was stripped of his deputy prime minister and education minister positions, while Shafie lost his rural and regional development minister post.

Both had been critical of the way Najib, who is also finance minister, had handled the 1MDB controversy.

The Umno Supreme Council has postponed its meeting twice since the Cabinet reshuffle, as the party grapples with a backlash from the increasingly unhappy grassroots. – September 8, 2015.

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