

**Muhyiddin Suspended Due To Failure to Assist Party President - Ahmad Bashah
Bernama
Feb 27, 2016**

ALOR SETAR, Feb 27 (Bernama) -- UMNO Deputy President Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was suspended because he had failed to carry out his duty to help party President, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Kedah Menteri Besar Kedah Datuk Seri Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah said the decision was not made to prevent him from speaking out.

"I see the action as apt because as Deputy President, he should help to strengthen the party, not weaken it. Nevertheless, Muhyiddin is still the UMNO Pagoh Division chief," he told reporters after handing over 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) here, Saturday.

At the Supreme Council (MT) meeting yesterday, UMNO Secretary-General Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor announced Muhyiddin's suspension as Deputy President with immediate effect and the duties would be performed by Vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said criticisms were hurled over the issue of Muhyiddin's suspension but the party machinery would be mobilised to explain to the people why the action was carried out.

In KUALA LUMPUR, Wanita UMNO chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil had questioned Muhyiddin Yassin's absence at the MT meeting which was seen as the best platform to explain his action for flouting the party regulation and spirit of struggle.

Shahrizat said Muhyiddin was informed of the meeting and he could have explained his action.

"Prior to this, we heard many stories that he had attended anti-Najib campaigns and other functions which clearly flouted the spirit of the party struggle," she told reporters when opening a transit centre for the homeless here, today.

Yesterday, Tengku Adnan said Muhyiddin had been told about the meeting but the latter informed via facsimile that he could not attend.

In PADANG TERAP, UMNO Supreme Council member Datuk Mahdzir Khalid regarded the suspension of Muhyiddin as a normal practice in politics.

Mahdzir, who is also Kedah UMNO Liaison Committee deputy chairman, said solidarity was the main key in a political party to face the general election.

In RAWANG, Selangor, Gerakan President Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong believed the decision made by the UMNO leadership to suspend Muhyiddin was in the interest of the party.

He was also confident that the UMNO leadership had gone through due consideration before making the decision.

"I think every party has its own way. Other parties have also made their internal decisions to take certain actions. I am sure decision made was in the best for the party," he told reporters at the Selangor Gerakan Youth Chinese New Year 2016 open house in Serendah near here, today.

Asked whether the issue would affect Barisan Nasional's performance during the Sarawak state election which was expected in April, Mah expressed confidence that the party's election machinery would be able to use the right strategy to ensure victory.

In KUALA LUMPUR, Tengku Adnan said Muhyiddin's suspension was in accordance with the stipulated procedure and that the motion to suspend Muhyiddin was submitted unanimously, discussed more than two hours by MT members and the decision made in accordance with UMNO's constitution.

"What didn't follow SOP (Standard Operating Procedure)? We have told him not to do anything like what he had done, such as the ceramah at the Sultan Sulaiman Club and other places.

"I don't understand what SOP he wants. We suspended him, not sack him as UMNO member. We suspended his post because his post should rightly aid the president," he said.

Tengku Adnan, who is also Federal Territories Minister, said this when asked to comment on Muhyiddin's claim, purportedly MT had flouted the disciplinary procedure on the suspension of the post.

In KOTA BAHARU, Kelantan UMNO Liaison chief Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed said UMNO needed solid leadership and unity in the party to continue its agenda to look after the welfare of the people and develop the nation.

He said any disruption in the party would surely bring difficulty to the government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"We want to ensure Najib, who was given the mandate by the people at the last general election to administer this country for five years, can receive solid support as the leader and prime minister so that he can continue the mandate," he said.

In BESUT, Agriculture and Agro-Based Industries Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek said the MT's decision to suspend Muhyiddin was not done in haste or due to hostility with anyone.

He said it was made after a discussion by taking into account many factors in the interest of the party.

In KUANTAN, Umno Information chief Tan Sri Annuar Musa said Muhyiddin's suspension was based on his current action.

He said Umno has never denied Muhyiddin's contribution to the party as the Deputy President for the past six years but the action was due to his action of not supporting the party president in efforts to strengthen the party's unity.

In KUALA LUMPUR, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said Muhyiddin's statement about alleged criminal "proof" against Najib showed that there was a high-level conspiracy to topple the prime minister.

In a statement here today she said based on Muhyiddin's statement, he was not only in breach of the Official Secrets Act, but was also complicit in a politically-motivated conspiracy to manipulate and abuse the legal system in order to overthrow a democratically elected prime minister.

Azalina, who is also UMNO Supreme Council member, said Muhyiddin was also indirectly questioning the credibility of the current Attorney-General and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

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