

Stay cool

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Stay calm, Hisham tells Umno Youth

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PUTRAJAYA: Umno Youth chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein wants his members, including his deputy Khairy Jamaluddin, to stay cool and rational in dealing with the attacks against the government by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his supporters.

He said any rash reaction would only make things worse and the best way to handle it is to go out and explain the government's and Umno's actions to the people.

"The people will evaluate all that has happened and whether they are done in the public interest or not and the

government will continue to make explanations on Mahathir's statements, so that the people will not be deceived and confused," he said.

Hishammuddin said very provocative remarks have been made, including by Matthias Chang (a former political secretary to Mahathir) who said recently he wanted to spit on those Malays who are now against Mahathir.

"Matthias said he will spit on my face. It is inappropriate to say that but better he spit on my face when I am still alive as I can then respond, then for him to spit on my grave," he said.

Chang yesterday called his third press conference where he again attacked Khairy and

others close to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as well as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Nazri Abdul Aziz.

On what he thought of the way Nazri has been confronting Mahathir, Hishammuddin said: "For me, this is his way and he has been honest, sincere and consistent in how he deals with the issue. He defended Mahathir the same way in the past."

Hishammuddin said he also could not accept the fact that Mahathir had attacked the prime minister at a forum attended by opposition leaders.

He said whatever explanations the government gives will not satisfy Mahathir.

"Will our explanations satisfy him? I don't think they will. After this there will be more and more issues that will be raised?"

Asked whether some businessmen who did not get projects from Abdullah and those who were no longer in positions of influence and power could be behind Mahathir attacking the government, Hishammuddin said it was not just unhappy businessmen but others who could be trying to create problems.

"I cannot doubt that there might be ulterior motives because everybody have their own interests but in the end the party and government will prevail if we explain everything clearly to the people," he said.