

Hisham: Build trust for good ties

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PUTRAJAYA: Younger leaders of the youth wings of Barisan Nasional component parties must build trust among themselves and work towards a joint destiny, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said.

The Umno Youth chief said there were those who were tempted to look at issues purely based on their racial group to gain temporary popularity with their own race.

"In the long term, that will not be beneficial to the party nor the individual because that approach has been proven in history not to be acceptable by the majority of Malaysian people," he said.

He pointed out that his relationship with the youth heads - which was built over many years - was very good.

"It has allowed us to overcome many issues that may be sensitive. We have discussed them in the proper channel

without them being because we know each other and trust each other.

"That trust is based on personality and we need to widen that scope to the younger lead-

ers and also other members," he told a press conference here yesterday.

Hishammuddin said one of the issues Umno Youth would be touching on at its assembly on Tuesday was its relationship with the youth wings of Barisan component parties and its strengths and weaknesses.

To a question, he said that while it was not easy to fulfil the demands of all races, what was needed were wisdom, maturity and sincerity.

"Whether it succeeds or not depends on the credibility of the leaders.

"That should be inculcated in all - Umno Youth, MCA, MIC and the others," he added.

He also said that after the 1997-1998 political crisis following the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the Umno Youth movement had recovered and was standing strong.

As for the fallout between former president Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and current president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, he did not think it would have a huge impact on the movement.

He said members knew that what was important was the interest of the party and not that of any individual.

"We have gone through a lot of crises in Umno (in the past) that if not handled properly could have meant the end of the party.

"But in this particular case, although statements (from Umno Youth divisions on the Dr Mahathir issue) have been strong, contradictory and conflicting, there are no structural cracks or problems that would jeopardise the movement.

"We are very strong but we will not take anything for granted," he said.