

Dr M's son must rethink his exco position, say leaders

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SAYING they have lost respect for exco member Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, Umno Youth state chiefs want him to rethink his position in the movement.

They said Mukhriz's comments about Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's presidential speech were unforgivable and an insult to the leader, the party and the Youth wing.

At a joint press conference yesterday, they unanimously called for an emergency exco meeting to be convened as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

"We view this very seriously.

We are offended by what he has said. He has belittled the president's policy speech.

"He has broken ranks. He has negated the decision made collectively at the Youth exco meeting to support the party president.

"So we ask Mukhriz to review his post as exco member. He has to understand and accept whatever decision we may make," said spokesman Ashakari Abu Noor, the Malacca state chief.

Asked whether they were urging Mukhriz to resign from the post, the state chiefs were

non-committal.

Mukhriz had said on Wednesday that Abdullah's speech at the Umno general assembly offered nothing new.

On whether the comments could be deemed constructive criticism, Johor chief Razali Ibrahim said criticisms and insults were two different things.

"Saying there's nothing new in the president's speech - that's not criticism; that's an insult! If he had wanted to, he could have found good points in the speech.

"And if you think there's nothing positive or nothing new, you

don't have to speak out.

"We gave full recognition to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad as the past leader," he said.

Describing Mukhriz as a friend, Razali said Dr Mahathir's son should have known better.

Mukhriz, he noted, was a very senior exco member and had garnered the highest number of votes from the wing during the last election.

"He should set a good example for us. Don't blame us now if we act," he said.

Asked if the Youth exco members were all yes-men, Razali said that was not the

case, adding that the young had their ideals and passions.

Federal Territory chief Datuk Mohd Norza Zakaria said criticisms should be made through the proper channels and not in public.

The movement had no need for a "hero" who humiliated the party leader, he added.

According to all the state chiefs, they were so peeved that they did not contact Mukhriz after the news of his controversial statement had come out.

"We'll see him at the exco meeting," they said.

Former Umno secretary-gen-

eral Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat said the wing could take action.

"It's improper, so the wing has the right to question him. It is left to Mukhriz to decide what he should do next.

"Discipline within the party ranks is very important and we cannot allow personal issues to distract the assembly. *Nak tunjuk hero buat apa* (Why be a hero)?" Mohamed said.

"We agreed that his father should be respected based on his contributions to the country and party, but now the president is Pak Lah and likewise we have to respect his position."