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MUHYIDDIN TO DEFEND UMNO VICE PRESIDENT'S POST

PULAU PINANG, Jan 9 (Bernama) -- Another incumbent today voiced his intention to defend his post in the race for the vice presidency in the Umno general assembly this year.

Tan Sri Haji Muhyiddin Yassin said: "I still have the intention to serve in that position and I hope party members will support me."

Muhyiddin, the Sports and Youth Minister, was speaking to reporters after opening the Belia Masjid Nasional conference here.

Earlier, two other incumbents Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhamad Taib had announced their intention to defend their posts.

Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi set the ball rolling with his announcement last Dec 21 that he was offering himself for nomination to the post.

First elected to the post in 1984, he served for three terms until his defeat at the party convention in 1993.

Muhyiddin said he did not make a statement earlier since he had just returned from leave and was busy concentrating on his ministerial duties and attending to party matters.

"I accept whatever the decision made by delegates since I have suffered defeat in 1990 and won the post in 1993," he added.

Of his winning the seat at the last convention when he was then Johor Menteri Besar, he said anyone contesting should not be connected with his official government position as the wisdom and maturity of the candidate had to be respected.

"They (the convention delegates) know how to assess," he said, adding that the delegates voted him into office at the last convention probably on certain other considerations, he added.

Muhyiddin agreed with party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's views that delegates should choose leaders based on performance and capabilities rather than consideration for specific groups. -- BERNAMA