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Mukhriz to vie for Umno posts

By Sheridan Mahavera; Hamidah Atan

ALOR STAR, Fri. - Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, third son of former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, will contest two Umno Youth posts in the party's September elections.

Mukhriz, 40, has offered himself for the Kubang Pasu Umno division Youth chief post and an Umno Youth Exco post.

It is learnt that Kedah Umno Youth will pass a resolution soon to endorse Mukhriz for the Exco post.

Mukhriz said he was persuaded by the confidence Kedah Umno Youth had shown in him.

"I thank them for their support. I know that if I am elected, the Exco post has many responsibilities but I am up for it," he said.

Mukhriz's bid for the Kubang Pasu post has gained six nominations from 16 Umno Youth branches in the division. To be eligible, he needs seven more nominations from the division's 88 Youth branches.

Umno Youth branches nationwide started their meetings on June 6 and will conclude them by June 30.

Divisional meetings and elections begin next month.

"I only made my intentions known last week," Mukhriz said. "I can be considered a latecomer but I am confident that I can serve the division."

Mukhriz quashed rumours that his father was "not too keen" on his election bid.

"During his term, my father was wary of creating a `dynasty' in Kubang Pasu," he said.

"I feel it is my turn to return the support shown to my father while he was division chief, by serving the division and Kubang Pasu as Youth chief."

Mukhriz, who has not held any political posts, is the fifth of Dr Mahathir and Tun Siti Hasmah Ali's seven children.

A businessman, he has helmed the Maktab Rendah Sains Mara (MRSM) alumni association for the past 11 years.

Umno Youth head Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein, speaking at a Press conference in Kuala Lumpur, said the question of who should be elected as the deputy head must be resolved amicably before the party elections.

"The aspiring candidates are all good friends and they have worked together for the party. My advice to them is that they should not allow the party election to create a rift among them.

"The Umno Youth executive council has unanimously decided to resolve the contest for the deputy head post within the party circle," he said after chairing the movement's executive council meeting at the party headquarters at the Putra World Trade Centre.

Hishammuddin, who is also the Education Minister, said this when asked whether the meeting had discussed on the possible contest for the Youth head and deputy post.

Meanwhile, in Seremban, Rembau Umno head and Menteri Besar Datuk Mohamad Hasan said today the division's Youth meeting recently had proposed that Khairy Jamaluddin be elected unopposed as the Youth chief of the division.

Mohamad said that Khairy had "good leadership qualities".

"We have always welcomed young, able and bright people like him to serve Umno," he said.

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