

## **Battle-scarred Najib to defend Umno presidency**

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Following the ruling coalition's electoral debacle in 2008, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was pressured to relinquish his post and step down as Umno president.

However, his successor Najib Abdul Razak, who sustained an even more severe bruising in this year's polls with regard to BN's performance, would not hand over the baton.

To his credit, Umno, on the other hand, emerged as the biggest winner with 88 parliament seats.

At a press conference this afternoon, Najib announced that he would be defending his Umno president post should there be a contest in the coming party polls.

"I have decided to defend my post as Umno president following the support I received from the branches and divisions," he told reporters.

Najib, however, declined to comment on whether he expected the post to be challenged, saying this would be decided on Saturday at 5pm, when the contenders would be finalised.

The prime minister also said that he did not have a particular team and that all were part of his team in Umno.

Previously, speculation had been rife that Umno No 2, Muhyiddin Yassin, who was rumoured to be backed by former president Dr Mahathir Mohamad, would vie for the top post.

In the aftermath of the GE, there had been widespread calls for the two Umno top posts to be left unchallenged.

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin is expected to announce which post he would be vying for later this evening.

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