

Hisham spurns 'weakest' tag in Umno veep contest

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Umno vice-president Hishammuddin Hussein is unfazed by online blog polls which show that he is seen as the weakest of six candidates vying for the three posts up for contest next month.

NONEAccording to Berita Harian, he said the online polls are not reflective of the his real support on the ground.

"I don't care, it was the same the last time. I was left far behind but in the end I still got the chance to lead (as vice-president)," he was quoted as saying.

"The blogs cannot claim to know the hearts of delegates. The fact is, when we meet, their (hearts) will change."

Hishammuddin, Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Shafie Apdal are defending their posts, while Kedah Menteri Besar Mukhriz Mahathir, former Malacca chief minister Ali Rustam and Felda chairperson Mohd Isa Abdul Samad are the new challengers.

In the challenge for the Wanita Umno leader's post, former head Rafidah Aziz has denied that Maznah Mazlan, who is challenging incumbent Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, is her proxy.

"That is ridiculous ... why fear shadows?" she told Berita Harian.

Maznah herself has already denied the claim.

Shahrizat had unseated Rafidah in the last party polls.

azlanThe other challenger for the Wanita Umno top post is Kulim Bandar Baharu Umno committee member Raihan Suliman Palestin.

The Malay daily also reported that 216 candidates withdrew from contesting during the 72-hour cooling-off period. However, there were no pullouts for the major posts.

The final list of candidates is expected to be announced later today.

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