

KJ has no problem working with Dr M's son
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The bitterness between the former premier and Umno Youth chief is well-known. Dr Mahathir Mohamad often described Khairy Jamaluddin as the de facto prime minister when the latter's father-in-law held the leadership reins.

In the 2008 Umno elections, the bitterness went up another notch when Khairy defeated Mahathir's son Mukhriz for the youth chief post.

NONEIn the coming polls, Khairy would be defending his title while Mukhriz (left) had decided to vie for a position higher up the hierarchy, setting his eyes on one of the three vice-president posts.

Despite the tension between the two camps, Khairy, however, said that he would have no issues working with Mukhriz, should the latter be elected a vice-president.

"I have no problem, we have worked as a team before when I was deputy Umno Youth chief and he was Umno Youth exco," he told Berita Harian in an interview.

The Oxford-trained politician was responding to a question on whether he could cooperate with Mukhriz if the latter held a more superior post.

In the interview, Khairy revealed that he had known Mukhriz, who is 11 years his senior, since the age of six.

He said that Mukhriz had a right to contest for the party's vice presidency as Umno was an open party.

"We need all leaders to play a role in Umno," he added.

In the battle for the Umno Youth chief post, Khairy would be embroiled in a five-way tussle, which included the son of former Umno secretary-general Sanusi Junid, a die-hard Mahathir loyalist.

It is speculated that Mahathir's forces in Umno are behind Sanusi's son Akhramsyah Muammar Ubaidah.

Meanwhile, Khairy also lacked the support of those in the Youth wing, who consider him to be too liberal and less vociferous when it comes to defending Malay rights.

His father-in-law Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who became prime minister in 2003, was Mahathir's handpicked successor.

Ties between the two began to sour when Abdullah started to pull the plug on projects mooted by Mahathir, which the latter claimed was due to Khairy's influence.

It was during Abdullah's tenure that the courts also freed Mahathir's arch nemesis Anwar Ibrahim from imprisonment.

Mahathir later played an instrumental role in Abdullah's ouster following the 2008 general election, but much to the octogenarian's disappointment, Khairy managed to survive the onslaught and rose up the political ladder.

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