

Johor MB gives Muhyiddin cautious backing
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While several top Umno leaders have distanced themselves from Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin who was yesterday removed as deputy prime minister, Johor Menteri Besar Khaled Nordin has cautiously thrown his support behind the Pagoh MP.

"Muhyiddin is still Umno deputy president. It is hoped that all quarters will respect him.

"In Johor, I have no objections for any (Umno) division that wishes to invite him to officiate their annual general assembly," Khaled said in a Facebook posting.

This comes amid some Umno divisions revoking their invitation to Muhyiddin (photo) after he criticised Najib's handling of 1MDB when officiating the Cheras Umno division meeting last week.

Following the criticism, Najib announced an abrupt cabinet reshuffle yesterday, in which Umno vice-president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi replaced Muhyiddin as deputy prime minister.

Khaled urged Umno members to be patient in facing this development.

"I hope Umno members, particularly those from Johor, will remain calm in facing this moment with patience and strength.

"Pray to Allah that we will be given the strength to finally find the truth," he said.

However, Khaled stopped short of criticising Muhyiddin's ouster.

Muhyiddin yesterday stood by his criticism of 1MDB, stating that it was in the interest of the rakyat.

Najib, who is also finance minister, has been under siege for his handling of 1MDB fiasco, which has accumulated RM41.8 billion in debt.

A special task force investigating 1MDB is also looking at claims that RM2.6 billion was deposited into Najib's private bank accounts.

However the fate of the investigation hit a brick wall after attorney-general Abdul Gani Patail was sacked yesterday, the same day of the cabinet reshuffle, and replaced with former Federal Court judge Mohamed Apandi Ali.

If the new attorney-general, who has sole prosecutorial powers, refuses to proceed with the case, the special task force's investigation will be rendered moot.

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