

**Muhyiddin expresses support for 'scandal-free' Kedah MB**  
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Kedah Menteri Besar Mukhriz Mahathir is a well-liked leader who has remained scandal-free, said Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin in response to the attempted coup initiated by state Umno leaders yesterday.

Backing Mukhriz, Muhyiddin said the Kedah Umno liaison chief is well-liked by the people as he has so far maintained a clean track record and is free from allegations of immoral acts, criminal breach of trust or corruption.

Muhyiddin also described Mukhriz as an Umno leader with calibre and is popular among party members and the rakyat.

"I believe that Mukhriz should be given the opportunity to continue leading the Kedah state government," Muhyiddin said in a Facebook post.

He said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, himself had, during the 13th general election campaign, promised to appoint Mukhriz as Kedah menteri besar if BN succeeded to wrest the state from PAS.

He said it is "unfortunate" if the move to oust Mukhriz was motivated by the "personal interest of certain parties and not for the people of Kedah".

Muhyiddin, who himself has been sidelined in the party despite holding the number two post, said the recent developments would not help Umno in battling any severe crisis of confidence.

He also expressed concern that Umno would further lose the rakyat's respect if the party's central leaders were to entertain the calls for Mukhriz's ouster.

"My biggest worry is that the split within Umno will become more apparent and the party will become weaker," he said.

Muhyiddin's removal as deputy prime minister last year caused a rift within Umno.

The attempted coup against Mukhriz was led by Kedah Umno deputy chief Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah, who said Kedah Umno has **lost confidence** in Mukhriz to lead the state.

In response, the **defiant MB declared** that he is appointed to the post by virtue of the rakyat's mandate and the state sultan's consent.

Mukhriz's supporters have also responded quickly to counter the coup attempt, mobilising a **1,000-strong pro-Mukhriz rally** in Alor Setar last night.

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