

Hishammuddin pledges to 'continue party's struggle'
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PUTRAJAYA - Umno vice-president Hishammuddin Hussein said he would continue to be with Terengganu Umno in pursuing the party's struggle even though he was no longer its state liaison chairman.

"Terengganu was under the opposition before, but through hard work and with the cooperation of the state leaders, the people of Terengganu returned the mandate to Umno.

"This is the trust we have to shoulder and preserve where the people of Terengganu have to lead the leadership and determine the state's future," he said in a statement on the revamp by Umno of the party's state leadership.

Menteri Besar Ahmad Said has been appointed the new Terengganu Umno liaison chairman, following a revamp announced by the party secretary-general, Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, Monday.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Ahmad Said said his focus now was to get the people, especially the young generation, to understand Umno's struggle, which was for religion, race and the country.

In GEORGE TOWN, the new state Umno chairman, Zainal Abidin Osman, regarded his appointment as a challenge and thanked party president Najib Abdul Razak for the trust in him.

"I'll work hard to carry out the responsibilities entrusted on me the best possible with the support of all Umno and Barisan Nasional leaders in the state," he added.

Meanwhile Penang Umno Information chief Musa Sheikh Fadzir, who is appointed the state Umno deputy chairman, said Zainal Abidin's appointment as the new state chairman, replacing Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, was expected.

"Zainal's appointment is apt because he is a local who understands the needs of the Penang people and Umno as an opposition in the state," he added.

In ALOR SETAR, Merbok Umno division chief Tajul Urus Md Zain said the appointments of Bakar Bata Assemblyman Ahmad Bashah Md Hanapiah and Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister, Mukhriz Mahathir, as the state Umno chairman and deputy chairman, respectively, should be respected and supported by all Umno leaders and members in Kedah if they wanted Barisan Nasional to recapture the state in the next general election.

Ahmad Bashah, who replaced Rural and Regional Development Minister Shafie Apdal, said he would not disappoint Najib and Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin for their trust in him and would work hard to wrest back the state from the opposition in the coming general election.

"My focus now is to drawn up programmes at the division and branch levels together with the Youth and Puteri wings, he told a media conference at Bangunan Tunku.

He urged all division leaders in the state to close rank and set aside their differences for Umno's sake.

On Mukhriz's appointment as his deputy, Ahmad Bashah, said he had no problems working with Mukhriz whose vast experience could help him draw up more effective programmes to recapture the state from the opposition.

On the opposition chief in the state assembly, he said Mahdzir Khalid would continue to hold the post.

Kedah Gerakan chairman, Dr Cheah Soon Hai, said the party supported the appointment of the two new state Umno leaders and would extend full cooperation to them.

Kedah MIC Kedah, S. Ananthan, welcomed their appointment which he said could restore Umno and BN's strength in the state.

In KANGAR, Perlis Menteri Besar Dr Md Isa Sabu, who is retained as the state Umno liaison chairman, regarded the appointment of former Menteri Besar Dr Shahidan Kassim as his deputy as providing the state with a strong combination to enhance Umno unity in the state.

Meanwhile, Shahidan, when asked whether he would accept the appointment, said he would have to discuss the matter with his friends first. - Bernama

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