

Say sorry to PM, Mukhriz advised

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KUALA LUMPUR: Umno Youth exco member Mukhriz Mahathir should be more objective and be able to differentiate between his position as a party member and as the son of a former party president, said Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

He said it would be good for Mukhriz to apologise to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for his remark last week.

"Once we become party members, one of our pledges is to give full support and loyalty to the party. We have to separate between our love for our family and for the party.

"Whatever we do, if it could affect the party's good name and interest, we should take an objective action and view," he told reporters at the Islamic Arts Museum here yesterday.

Earlier, he launched a book titled *Hamas Unwritten Chapters* by Palestinian Dr Azzam Tamimi, director of the London-based Institute of Islamic Political Thought.

Mukhriz had reportedly said during the Umno general assembly last week that he was a "little bit" disappointed with the presidential speech, claiming "it offered nothing new" and was "an address [Abdullah] delivered last year".

He drew flak from Umno Youth for making the remark, which deviated from the movement's position supporting the president.

Syed Hamid said Umno, being a democratic party, respected the member's right to criticise, but added that it should be conveyed through appropriate channels as the failure to do so could weaken or create problems for the party.

"It would give a chance for the Opposition to run Umno down. We must be wise in managing criticisms. As party members, we have to be loyal to the party but it does not mean we do not accept criticism.

"Criticism has its limit, ways and methods. He should use the right channels to

ensure the party is not affected," he said.

He noted that Mukhriz's comment, made openly, did not add value to the party.

"We will be seen to be not united and have no respect for our leaders," he added.

When it was suggested that Mukhriz was perhaps willing to sacrifice his party position for the love of his father, Syed Hamid said no one can dispute the fact that everyone loved his or her parents.

"But, there are two platforms here, family and politics. The one for our family we should keep it within the family. In the party, we are bound by regulations and the constitution," he said.

Asked whether the situation could be resolved if Mukhriz apologise to Abdullah, Syed Hamid said it would be good for him to do so as a show of respect for the leader.

"We do not like people to insult Mahathir,

(he) being an elderly person and our former leader. Likewise, Abdullah is our president now, whereby all of us come under him.

"So, it is nothing wrong for him to offer an apology. He will not be downgraded for doing so," he added.

Umno Youth chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said in a news report yesterday that Mukhriz had a day or two to explain his remark to the movement's executive council before it decided on any disciplinary action.

Syed Hamid, who is also foreign minister, was asked to comment on the Netherland's recent proposal for a law to prevent Muslim women from wearing the *niqab* (full-face veil) in public places.

He said this was an unfair treatment, adding that he could not understand the rationale for the proposal.