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Malaysia Ex-Official Weighs Next Move After Ouster

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By YANTOULTRA NGUI

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia's former deputy prime minister is considering forming a new political movement or joining with the opposition after Prime Minister Najib Razak expelled him from the country's ruling party two days earlier.

"We must make decisions at the right time," Muhyiddin Yassin told a news conference Sunday at a university campus in Kuala Lumpur. "Then we will make a proper announcement as to what will be the next step forward, whether it will be in the form of a new political platform...or in the form of collaboration."

Mr. Najib expelled Mr. Muhyiddin and former Kedah state chief minister Mukhriz Mahathir, the son of Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, from the United Malays National Organization, state news agency Bernama reported Friday. The prime minister's office said it wouldn't comment on the matter.



Muhyiddin Yassin, Malaysia's former deputy prime minister, is weighing forming a new movement after his expulsion from UMNO.

Messrs. Muhyiddin and Mukhriz, who also attended Sunday's press conference, have been staunch critics in recent months of Mr. Najib's handling of a growing scandal

surrounding a state investment fund he founded in 2009 to promote economic growth, and both men have joined Dr. Mahathir's campaign urging Mr. Najib to

step down.

The fund, **1Malaysia Development Bhd.**, better known as IMDB, is being investigated in at least seven countries. Some investigators

have said they believe that \$6 billion went missing from the fund.

The expulsions came a day after the government announced that the head of the

country's antigrift agency would step down Aug. 1.

Mr. Najib and IMDB have repeatedly denied wrongdoing, and IMDB has said it is cooperating with the investigations. Malaysia's attorney general, Mohamed Apandi Ali, cleared Mr. Najib of wrongdoing in January.

Politically, UMNO appears to be strengthening; this month, it won two special elections with increased majorities. Mr. Najib's position is helped by infighting in Malaysia's opposition parties, particularly between the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, or PAS, and a breakaway Islamist party.

Mr. Muhyiddin said he would continue to serve as an independent member of parliament after his expulsion from UMNO, and emphasized that he would have to consult with a broad swath of opinion in the country before deciding what other moves to take.

"I am not going to jump the gun," he said.

—Celine Fernandez
in Kuala Lumpur
contributed to this article.