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Say it – who do you want as PM, Dr M asked

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad must make known who he wants as Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister to stop speculation that he is paving the way for his son Datuk Seri Mukhriz, says the press secretary to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Datuk Seri Tengku Sariffuddin Tengku Ahmad said if Dr Mahathir's attempts to unseat Najib were to have any credibility, he should "at least give a straight answer on who the alternative candidate is".

"Why does he always avoid answering this one simple but essential question? Why is he con-

sistently evasive about his plans for Datuk Seri Mukhriz's political future?

"If he still refuses, he should stop this distraction for Malaysia and quietly retire with the grace people expect of a former statesman," Tengku Sariffuddin said in a statement yesterday.

On Friday, Mukhriz was reported as saying that he would sue Tengku Sariffuddin if he did not retract his comments about Dr Mahathir promising former deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin the post of prime minister with the understanding that he groomed

Mukhriz to succeed him.

Tengku Sariffuddin said it was the people, not one man, who under the Constitution were entitled to democratically choose their Government and Prime Minister at the general election.

On Mukhriz's statement yesterday, where he told a foreign newspaper that he held no ambitions to becoming a Prime Minister, Tengku Sariffuddin questioned why the former Kedah menteri besar contested the Umno vice-president's post in 2013.

Tengku Sariffuddin said, everyone in Malaysian politics knew that

only someone who wanted to be Umno president and then, by default Prime Minister, would want to be vice-president. It was a key step to the top post.

"Maybe, it's because he lost the contest that Datuk Seri Mukhriz contradicts himself by saying he didn't want to climb the ladder.

"Or maybe because he was told to say this by his father, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. But we all know that he or his father did want him to climb the ladder, because he stood for election as vice-president," added Tengku Sariffuddin. — Bernama