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'I DON'T PLAN TO BE UMNO DE FACTO LEADER'

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'Priority now is to clear my name,' says Najib

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FORMER Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said he has no intention of becoming the party's de facto leader.

Najib, who is former prime minister, said his priority was to clear his name from the charges levelled against him.

"Since last week, many Umno leaders and members have asked me to return to the Umno leadership or to become its de facto leader. I thank them for their faith in me. However, I have no intention or wish to become the de facto leader," he posted on Facebook.

Najib, however, said he would continue to speak out on the people's interests and raise issues concerning the people and the country.

He expressed his readiness to help and support Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, who is now performing the duties of the president, and

the party leadership, when needed.

Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Lokman Noor Adam on Tuesday proposed that Najib be appointed as Umno de facto chief and opposition leader, in view of Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's move in handing over the duties of the president to Mohamad.

Lokman had argued that at this critical juncture, Umno needed a leader who was not only experienced, but respected by Barisan Nasional members of parliament.

On Zahid handing his duties to Mohamad, Najib said it was a noble and selfless move, which showed that Zahid prioritised the interests of the party.

"As a president who was democratically-elected by the party, this is a significant personal sacrifice, and not an easy decision,

"I am confident in Mohamad. He possesses the vision, leadership skills and has the trust of party leaders and members to stabilise and rebuild Umno."



Datuk Seri Najib Razak

Rembau member of parliament and former Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar has dismissed the idea of bringing in Najib to become the party's de facto leader, labelling it as nothing short of "stupid".

Via his Twitter account, Khairy, sarcastically labelled the news report, which quoted Lokman as proposing the move, as "fake news".

"Jangan sebarakan fake news. Tak ada orang yang akan memberi cadangan bingai macam ni. Saya yakin @LokmanAdam pun tak bongap macam ni. Eh."

(Don't spread fake news. No one would give a stupid idea like this. I'm certain @LokmanAdam isn't this dumb.)

There is no love lost between Khairy and Lokman, who have, on numerous occasions, locked horns on social media over various issues.

Khairy had stated that if he became Umno president, the first item on his agenda would be to sack Lokman, whom he described as "having the IQ of a carrot".