

**Mahathir's new tack on Umno top 2 posts - no contests**  
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Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today supported proposals for no contests for the top two Umno posts as it would split the party and Malays, joining a long line of party leaders against any challenges.

The influential former prime minister's comments came days after he told fund managers that there should be contests for all posts in Umno, which will hold party elections this November.

"Going by the democratic practice, we should have contests but Malaysians do not really understand the practice. If they lose, they will quit the party and set up another, causing the Malays and Umno to split further.

"In this connection, I support contests, but not for the two top posts of president and deputy president.

"I have contested before (for the post of Umno president) and I have won by only 43 votes. The loser took me to court and set up another party. The Malays have split due to the contests," Dr Mahathir was quoted as saying by the Bernama news service.

Dr Mahathir was referring to the 1987 party polls where he was challenged by Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah.

Eleven Umno members complained that there were illegal branches who sent representatives to decide on delegates and in 1988, the courts declared Umno illegal because of such branches.

Tengku Razaleigh tried to re-register as Umno Malaysia but was denied by the Registrar of Societies (RoS), who accepted Dr Mahathir's registration for Umno Baru. Since then, there has been no contests for the top two party posts.

Umno secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Mansor said on Sunday that the party supreme council had already decided that both the president and deputy president posts would not be contested in the party elections.

He expressed surprised over the claim by Umno supreme council member Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh that the move would be regarded as "undemocratic".

"During the previous supreme council meeting we decided that the two highest positions would not be contested.

"He (Idris Jusoh) also shared the same view with us during the meeting and I don't think he expressed otherwise," Tengku Adnan said in quotes carried by The Malay Mail.

Idris said on Saturday that the public would see no contests as undemocratic although it would be good for the party.

Pahang Umno liaison chairman Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob was among the few who said the

positions should be opened for contest.

Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak said on May 31 that he is prepared for any challenges to his position in the party polls.

However, there have been more calls against any challenges for top party posts, including by Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and today by the Federal Territory Umno. - June 17, 2013.

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