

Umno allows Norza to contest party polls

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Former Umno rising star Datuk Mohamad Norza Zakaria can now run in the party elections, four years after the party barred him from contesting internal polls due to corruption charges.

The ex-political secretary to former minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop was acquitted of the charges in 2010 and has faced the last several years in political wilderness.

"The party waited for some time before lifting my suspension probably because it wanted to concentrate on the general election. I fully understand its decision," he told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

But Norza said he had not made any decision yet whether he would contest the party elections.

Federal Territory Umno liaison committee secretary Datuk Seri Syed Ali Alhabsee said yesterday the party had considered the decision by the Temerloh Sessions Court to acquit Norza and felt that it was unfair for the party to continue on with the ban.

He said the party's management committee decided to lift the ban on Norza on May 29, 2013 during a meeting through an official letter dating June 12, 2013, allowing him to vote and run for office.

Norza, who is the former Federal Territory Umno Youth chief, was charged at the Temerloh Magistrate Court in Pahang on two counts for corruption involving a sum of RM 3,400 to secure posts in the then Umno polls.

On June 17, 2010, he was acquitted and freed of all charges after witnesses turned their testimony, forcing the prosecution not to submit evidence.

Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said recently the party polls this time will follow amendments made to Umno's constitution, which empowers 145,000 members at the grassroots level (including from the party's three wings) to determine the party leadership.

The polls will be carried out after the divisional meetings and before the party's general assembly - June 18, 2013

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