

**Mukhriz Confirms Contesting For Umno Vice-presidency**  
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ALOR SETAR, Sept 19 (Bernama) -- Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Dr Mahathir Thursday confirmed that he will be contesting for the Umno vice-presidency at the party election next month.

He said he made the decision after taking into consideration the many advice he received from all levels and after considering the most suitable post he should be contesting.

"I have asked myself whether I'm truly ready for this. I have taken into account all aspects of this matter.

"So, to represent the northern zone, especially Kedah, which has been returned to Umno, Kedah which is the birth state of our Father of Independence, and our Father of Modernisation, Kedah where the Sultan becomes the Yang di-Pertuan Agong twice, I humbly offer myself to run for Umno vice-presidency at the party election this year."

Mukhriz made the announcement at the ceremony to introduce Kedah candidates for Umno election 2013 at the Menteri Besar's Residence, Seri Mentaloon, here Thursday.

Apart from Mukhriz, five other Umno leaders, including Felda chairman Tan Sri Isa Samad and former Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, had announced their candidacies for the three Umno vice-president seats.

The three seats were currently held by Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is Home Minister, Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal (Rural and Regional Development Minister) and Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein (Defence Minister).

All of them had also announced that they will defend their seats.

Mukhriz, who is also Kedah Umno chairman, said as the state's leader, he must listen to the advice and try to meet the demands of his supporters.

"Among the advice I received is to ensure that I can continue serving the people from the highest level possible. These advice have become hopes and as a leader, I cannot escape, they have become my responsibility," he said.

In his speech, Mukhriz also pledged his full support to Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's leadership as the Umno President and Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as the Deputy Umno President.

At a press conference later, Mukhriz said he made the decision with the aim to translate the transformation he had wanted to make in the party through the slogan of 'Dare to Change' which he used when contesting for the post of Umno Youth chief in the party polls in 2009.

He said the opposition parties had started making preparation for the 14th general election and had opened their doors to young leaders to be involved in shaping the future of their parties.

"When the time comes for the 14th general election, these young leaders will be the ones who lead the opposition election machinery.

"These are the people that Umno has to face... If no changes are made in Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN), will there be a possibility for us to defend our 133 Parliamentary seats or even to increase the number? That is my main concern. We must change," he said.

Meanwhile, Mukhriz said his post as the Menteri Besar would probably become the biggest restriction for him in gaining support from Umno delegates across the country.

"As candidates, we have to gain support from the delegates across the country, but as a Menteri Besar of Kedah, I have responsibilities here. I may not have the time to go to other states to campaign," he added.

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