

**Mukhriz VP Candidacy, Rejuvenation For Umno**  
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**By Haslinda Zainal**

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) -- Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Dr Mahathir's announcement to contest for an Umno vice-presidency post at the election in October is viewed as a move to rejuvenate the party.

Political analyst Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Fuad Mat Jali said Mukhriz aimed to provide a balance in the third level of leadership between leaders with experience and younger individuals with fresh ideas.

"When there's competition the process is more open. The delegates will also have more choices between young and middle aged candidates," he told Bernama here on Friday.

A Geopolitics lecturer with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mohd Fuad, said Mukhriz will have to work hard as he is considered a new face compared to the current vice-presidents who have vast experience and long-term service.

"His chances are 50-50. The delegates will look into his track record in his capacity as former International Trade and Industry deputy minister for one term and Kedah Menteri Besar so far," he said.

He said it was important for delegates to be rational in their choice and evaluate the expertise, contribution and ability of the candidates to work with the party's highest leadership in order to forge Umno forward.

"It all boils down to their performance and ability to serve, this is what the candidates should be looking at" he said.

Meanwhile, former lecturer at Universiti Malaya's Malay Studies Academy, Assoc Prof Datuk Zainal Abidin Borhan said Mukhriz had to prove his capability and expertise in relation to whether the party could remain relevant.

"We want to see if Mukhriz is the one who can elevate Umno, if his entry can give the party a youthful boost and still work with the experienced leaders," he said.

He said those aiming to contest at the Umno election next month had the massive task of achieving the party's struggles and in particular to prepare for the 14th General Election.

With the announcement by Mukhriz, there are now six contestants for the three vice-presidency posts including Felda chairman Tan Sri Isa Samad and former Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Ali Rustam.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal have announced that they would be defending their posts.

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