

Najib Announces Decision To Defend Umno Presidency
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 19 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on Thursday announced his decision to defend the post of Umno president in the party election on Oct 19.

The Prime Minister said the decision was based on the support and confidence shown by party members at the grassroots level.

"Based on the feedback I received, the state Umno liaison bodies have made a resolution that I should continue to lead the party as Umno president.

"In addition to the opinions and views voiced at the meetings of the Umno branches, a majority of the Umno members want me to continue to lead the party as Umno president.

"I'm most thankful and touched for the support and trust given by Umno members at all levels.

"As such, with humility I accept the support and offer myself to defend the post of party president," he told reporters after opening the Middle Temple Conference 2013, here.

The election of Supreme Council members and divisional representatives to the Umno General Assembly 2013, scheduled to be held in December, will be held simultaneously at the divisional meetings on Oct 19.

The registration of candidates aspiring to contest for all posts at the Supreme Council or divisional committee level would be held this Saturday at the Umno Malaysia headquarters.

On his views if the party presidency were to be challenged by anyone, Najib said: "Wait for Saturday, then we will know the situation."

He gave the same reply when asked about the possibility that Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Mahathir might contest the post of vice-president.

Asked whether Mukhriz had met him to discuss the matter, the Prime Minister replied in jest: "Of course I meet with a lot of people."

When asked whether he had his own 'team' for the election this time, Najib said: "I'm the captain of the Umno team, so everybody is part of the team.

(However) we'll see the line up first. We'll see Saturday what happens."

On whether his decision to defend his presidential post would give an advantage in maintaining the status quo in Umno leadership, Najib said what was important was the stability of the party, while allowing changes to take place.

Noting that Umno had proven itself as a dynamic party, he said changes would take place in Umno at different levels including at the top from time to time.

Najib also said that Umno was trying to improve and strengthen itself, especially after the

13th general election.

He said what was important was to strengthen the party's value system such as fighting for the interest of the party above all, rejecting money politics and looking after the interest of the rakyat.

"These are the values that Umno members at all levels must portray to the people," he said, expressing hope that in this manner people's confidence in the party would increase.

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