

**Jerlun UMNO Agrees To Let Mukhriz Take The Helm Uncontested**  
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ALOR SETAR, Sept 20 (Bernama) -- The incumbents of three top posts in Jerlun UMNO Friday agreed to demote themselves to enable Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Mahathir to take the helm.

The division's head, Datuk Abu Hassan Sariff said he, his deputy Datuk Othman Aziz and vice-chief Aziz Mahmud were willing to demote themselves so that Mukhriz could win the divisional UMNO election uncontested.

As such, Abu Hassan said he would take the post of deputy chief, while Othman took the vice-chief post and Aziz, the secretary.

The three Jerlun UMNO leaders said the decision was made unanimously and it was part of their sacrifices to strengthen the party in a bid to get a bigger victory in the 14th general election.

"I do hope that no one will submit their nomination form to contest for the post of chief, deputy chief and vice-chief except the three of us.

"I hope that Jerlun UMNO members will give their full support to this decision," Abu Hassan said to the cheers of almost 500 UMNO members who were present at the ceremony to introduce Jerlun UMNO candidates for the party polls at Wisma UMNO Jerlun, some 30 kilometres from Alor Setar, Friday.

Meanwhile, Mukhriz, who is also Kedah UMNO Liaison chairman, said the decision would definitely ease the election in Jerlun UMNO division.

"Actually, I was offered the post of Jerlun UMNO chief two years ago, but now is the right time to take the responsibility," he said.

Mukhriz also announced that Jerlun Wanita UMNO chief and deputy chief posts were not contested and would be held by the incumbents Datuk Maznah Hamid and Rohani Md Arip respectively.

Meanwhile, Mukhriz said that he had his parents' blessings to contest for one of the three UMNO vice-president seats at the party election next month.

"I have met with them and my dad (Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad) left it to me to make the final decision, but he did give his advice and opinion based on his experience in contesting for the vice-president post.

"However, this year's election will be decided by 146,500 delegates. No more nomination system. There's a big different between his (Tun Dr Mahathir) time and the current situation," he said.

Apart from Mukhriz, former Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam and FELDA chairman Tan Sri Isa Samad are also vying for the vice-president post, while the three incumbents - Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal, Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri

Hishammuddin Tun Hussein - have made it clear that they will defend their seats.

Mukhriz said if he won the contest and joined the other two vice-presidents, they would definitely had something to offer to the party based on their experience in solving people's problems at the grass roots.

"It's not about policy or policy-making, but it's a responsibility to solve the people's problems, as well as poverty and employment issues depending on financial ability, human capital and the many aspects that have to be taken into account.

"In this aspect, my experience as a Menteri Besar, although only four months, is really needed at the central level. I'm confident that I can contribute by sharing my opinions and experience because I have come across many situations that demanded immediate decision," he added.

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