

**Don't postpone Umno elections, Mukhriz advises**  
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**By Zalinah Noordin**

**JITRA**, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir today called for the Umno elections not to be postponed.

Speaking at the Umno Jerlun division meeting here, Mukhriz said members have the right to decide who deserves to remain as office bearers in the party.

"If we really love the party then we should allow a real democratic process to take place.

"I'm advising this in view of latest developments which demands us to review the surprise council's decision to defer the party elections," Mukhriz said.

When asked if he was afraid that he would get into trouble, he said, "I don't see why I should get into trouble as it is a mere suggestion and whether it is accepted at all levels we have to wait and see."

The division meeting held at the SM Sains Kubang Pasu was officiated by Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal, who remarked in his opening speech that he was touched by the Jerlun Umno division support of which Mukhriz is the division chairman.

"He has the dynamics and what it takes to give the party a new lease of life," he said before thousands of delegates present.

Meanwhile, speaking on his removal from Cabinet, Mohd Shafie declared his loyalty towards Umno, saying that losing positions and being dropped from the government and Umno is not something unusual but it should not be a hindrance for true leaders to continue serving the rakyat.

Despite no longer having any ministerial posts, Mohd Shafie said the fight for the rakyat should be continued.

"I am one of the pioneers of the party in Sabah and I ask for members to be loyal to the party despite whatever circumstances as Umno is the only Malay party which really fights for the rakyat.

"In politics, it is normal to go through obstacles and tests just like what I went through but that doesn't mean we should stop serving the rakyat," said the Semporna lawmaker after launching the Jerlun Umno division meeting here today.

He also stressed on the importance of keeping and maintaining the confidence of the rakyat especially in trying times.

"This is very fundamental to ensure the continuous support and victory in the upcoming general election," he said.

He assured that he would remain in Umno come what may as he was not after any posts or position.

“As Umno vice-president, I have been chosen by the rakyat but my ministerial post was an appointed one by the Prime Minister so it is normal to be dropped from my previous post as it is his prerogative.

“Differences in opinion is a norm on how you run a country but I have never questioned why I was dropped as Rural and Regional Development Minister,” he said.

Mohd Shafie also rubbished blog posts and rumours that he was among those plotting to overthrow the government, saying that he is an Umno vice-president.

“There is no reason for me to do so, it is just baseless slander and rumours,” he said.

What is more important, he said, is to strengthen the foundation of the party in continuously getting support from the rakyat and that could be done by being realistic and facing the situation head-on.

While admitting that there were “certain things” he was not in favour of, he said he did not oppose all the time.

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