

## **Support, praises for Mukhriz, Kedahans say revolt is wrong way to oust him**

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**By Looi Sue-Chern**

Hundreds of supporters of embattled Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir gathered in front of Bangunan Tunku Umno Kedah in Alor Star tonight to stand in solidarity with their state leader.

The crowd began gathering since 8pm. Many chanted Mukhriz's name to show their support, just as Kedah Umno wanted him out.

He arrived at 9.30pm to loud applause and cheers from the crowd.

Some were heard saying that they give their total support to Mukhriz, and others who were approached by reporters sang praises for him.

Led by state party deputy liaison chairman Datuk Seri Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah, 14 of Kedah Umno's division leaders made an open revolt today.

Umno member, Noor Azizy Noor, 48, who was in the crowd, said changing menteri besar might not solve problems.

He said he felt the division leaders should have talked things out with Mukhriz if they had been upset with him.

"We were shocked this afternoon. We heard about the press conference where the division chiefs said they no longer have confidence in the MB.

"We feel saddened and angry that things went down that way... it should not have. Many feel it was not right to do it that way. There must be a better way to deal with things.

"They (those unhappy with Mukhriz) should have called a meeting with him, talk things over, point out his weaknesses to him and question him on his plans."

Just hours ago, Ahmad Bashah had voiced Kedah Umno's loss of confidence in Mukhriz and appealed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to make an immediate change to the state leadership.

He was joined by party division chiefs in the state who also want Mukhriz gone.

Mukhriz has helmed the state since the 13th general election.

Azizy, an ordinary Umno member for 30 years, said Mukhriz was a good state leader so far, being down to earth and approachable.

He said the people could easily meet Mukhriz at mosques and other public places.

"Sometimes, it was Mukhriz who approached the people first to say hello and ask about their welfare. He is so humble."

Azizy said the people were not stupid and they understood what was happening.

"It should be about the people of Kedah, regardless of their race, and the future of the state."

Kedah football supporters' club spokesman Hazrik Abdullah, 28, who was also among the crowd with other football fans, said Mukhriz had also done much for the sport.

"That is why we support him. He has made a difference. Kedah has a strong team again.

"When we made the final of the Super League last year it was so unexpected and extraordinary. The transformation of the state team by Mukhriz contributed to that."

Hazrik also praised Mukhriz as a leader who could stand close to the people, both young and old.

He and his friends also sang a tune "Kami nak Datuk Mukhriz" (We want Datuk Mukhriz). – January 20, 2016.

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