

Mukhriz: Pakatan's choice for PM should be announced before GE14

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The PPBM deputy president says Pakatan Harapan leaders are going to discuss the matter.

SHAH ALAM: PPBM deputy president Mukhriz Mahathir has agreed that Pakatan Harapan's (PH) candidate for prime minister should be made known to the public before the 14th general election (GE14), which is expected by the middle of next year.

"We are waiting to discuss this among the PH members before a decision is made," he said.

"But I agree that the PM candidate should be announced before the election," he told reporters at the 12th PKR National Congress here today.

Mukhriz sought patience on the matter, saying it will be discussed at the top level of the coalition's leadership.

He said this when asked if there was any other candidate besides PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim who could assume the position if PH won GE14.

Yesterday, PKR youth leader Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad said party president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail should take charge as interim prime minister while waiting for the release of Anwar, who is currently in jail, in the event of an opposition victory.

He said Wan Azizah had proven herself as an effective leader by leading the opposition through tumultuous times.

PH has not named its candidate since PPBM, led by chairman Dr Mahathir Mohamad and president Muhyiddin Yassin, joined the coalition on March 20.

Leaders of the original component parties PKR, DAP and Amanah had been supportive of Anwar as prime minister when they were in the Pakatan Rakyat, which was terminated in June 2015.

Certain individuals, including former law minister Zaid Ibrahim who joined DAP on Feb 7, have recently called for Mahathir, who was prime minister from 1981 to 2003, to be PH's choice.

Mahathir has, however, said the matter should not be raised at present so as not to become a point of contention within the coalition.

The opening of the congress today saw PKR delegates carrying placards that read “Anwar the 7th PM”. Among those who held up the cards were DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang and Amanah president Mohamad Sabu.

Asked why he did not hold a card as well, Mukhriz replied with a laugh: “I was not given one.”

Earlier, Wan Azizah and PKR deputy president Azmin Ali, together with the vice-presidents, had also displayed the placards while on stage.

Mahathir and Muhyiddin Yassin did not hold up any sign. Mahathir, who was also on stage, appeared to be engrossed in taking pictures of the gathering on his mobile phone at that time.

Muhyiddin was seen smiling and clapping at the show of placards but did not participate.

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