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Outcome of Umno elections likely to mirror wings polls

By IKRAM ISMAIL

ikram.ismail@mmail.com.my

AS both incumbent Umno Wanita and Youth chiefs retained their posts, political analysts described the result as a predictable outcome.

They also feel the results will be an advantage to the incumbents, who are set to defend their posts in the election for supreme council seats and vice presidency positions this Saturday.

Incumbent youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and Wanita chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil both received 189 and 172 votes from the delegates respectively to retain their posts.

Meanwhile, former Malacca Puteri chief Mas Ermieyati Samsudin was elected as the new Puteri chief based on her position as Masjid Tanah MP and her popularity among Puteri members.

Universiti Utara Malaysia School of International Studies dean Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, said both Khairy

and Shahrizat had an added advantage prior to the Oct 12 polls.

"They are (Umno president) Datuk Seri Najib Razak's preferred candidates, as they are able to help with his transformation agenda," said Mohd Azizuddin.

"Besides, the challengers for Wanita and Youth chiefs were not as strong as the incumbents, and new Puteri chief Mas Ermieyati won based on merit because she was a Puteri exco and head of Malacca's Puteri division."

He added that the return of the incumbents could lead to a transformation within the party.

"Khairy has a strong potential to be a reformist based on the brand of politics he propagates. He will definitely support the president's agenda. But Shahrizat has to do more to distance herself from scandals and prove she is a champion of women's causes."

Deputy Head for National Council of Professors Prof Jayum Jawan said Umno's youth and Wanita wings are also in tune with Najib, adding that Shahrizat and Khairy would not have won on their own.

"Remember, Shahrizat was appointed special advisor with ministerial status to the prime minister and Khairy was finally given a cabinet portfolio. These two instances were a prelude to the delegates Najib wants," he said.

Meanwhile, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Centre for Technology Policy and International Studies director, Prof Dr Azmi Hassan opines that changes from the 191 Umno divisions after the polls will reflect the supreme council and vice presidency results.

"Since both the supreme council and vice presidency are influential posts, the 146,000 delegates will vote with the next general election in mind," he said.