

Anwar saga in Umno over, says Rais

3/4/12 KTS
THE Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim saga in Umno is over and the party should now look forward to continuing the Malay struggle in the next millennium, Datuk Dr Rais Yatim said.

The former Parti Melayu Semangat 36 deputy president, who is now an Umno member, said it was about time Umno became more objective in its assessment of a leader.

He said assessment should not be flimsy or based on an afterthought of getting something out of somebody.

"The Anwar saga has passed. Umno must look forward to the next millennium with a frame of mind to tackle socio-political issues more objectively.

"The process of idolising somebody must have a limit," he said yesterday.

On whether Umno would lead or emerge stronger after the (Anwar) episode, he said he believed so, with the need for injection of new ideas into the party at this stage.

However, he said, more pioneering was still needed in the area of moving towards a more Malay agenda of struggle.

He said if Umno had the courage to do away with the practice of personality cults here, there would be a stronger chance for real democracy to take place in the party.

"Personal traits should not be the focus, and the idolisation of a

personality should be discarded," he said.

Dr Rais said there were many leaders now but they must each be tested according to their respective track records and credibility.

Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah urged members to view the president's speech as "advice from a father to his children."

Referring to Dr Mahathir's criticism of foreign elements trying to set up a "credible puppet" government, he said such practices must be avoided.

To a question on whether he was willing to offer himself as a candidate for the deputy president's post, Tengku Razaleigh said he "had no such plans."