

Husband, wife vie for PKR No 1
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Parti Keadilan Rakyat president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail would be defending her post in a three-cornered fight against her husband and party advisor, Anwar Ibrahim, and party veteran Abdul Rahman Othman at the PKR congress on May 25-27.

Wan Azizah, who has helmed the party formed in the wake of Anwar's sacking as deputy prime minister in 1998, previously indicated earlier that she would make way for her husband to take over the party.

Anwar received 120 nominations from party divisions while Wan Azizah bagged 10. Abdul Rahman, formerly party deputy president, has seven.

Should Anwar win the contest on May 26, it is not clear if he can assume the post, since his five-year ban from active politics only expires next April due to a previous conviction for corruption.

It is also unclear who would assume the post should the Registrar of Societies not accept Anwar's possible win.

It could either be deputy president Dr Syed Husin Ali, who is confirmed today to have retained his post unopposed, or Wan Azizah, who is likely to be the second highest vote-getter in presidency race.

"We will cross the bridge when we reach it," said party secretary-general Kamarul Baharin when announcing the final list of contestants at the party headquarters in Kuala Lumpur today.

No contest for deputy post

Meanwhile, Azmin Ali, the sole challenger for the deputy president post, officially withdrew today from the race. Instead, Azmin would be defending his vice-president post.

When met, Azmin said he initially accepted nominations for the deputy president post due to strong demands from party grassroots. He has 57 nominations for the party No 2 against Syed Husin's 73.

He withdrew from the contest at the eleventh hour upon consultation with Syed Husin and other party leaders.

Five others vying for the three elected vice-president post includes incumbent Dr Lee Boon Chye, women's wing chief Fuziah Salleh, PKR Sabah deputy chief Jeffrey Kitingan, incumbent appointed vice-president Mustaffa Kamil Ayub and supreme council member Dr Xavier Jeyakumar.

Another incumbent R Sivarasa did not accept 38 nominations - the fourth highest - to defend his vice-president post. Instead, he would be contesting for one of the supreme council member posts.

There are 63 contestants vying for the 20 supreme council seats.

Meanwhile, KS Nallakaruppan - who has 57 nominations for the vice-president post, the second highest - has shocked party members by pulling out from the race.

PKR party constitution allows the appointment of two additional vice-presidents. Those elected will serve their respective posts for three years until the next party polls in 2010.

The PKR congress is to take place this weekend at a Chinese school in Seremban.

List of contestants and number of nominations

President

Anwar Ibrahim (120)
Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail (10)*
Abdul Rahman Othman (7)

Deputy president

Syed Husin Ali (won unopposed)*

Vice-president (three elected posts)

Dr Lee Boon Chye (85)*
Fuziah Salleh (42)
Azmin Ali (34)*
Dr Jeffrey Kitingan (33)
Mustapa Kamil Ayub (33)
Dr Xavier Jayakumar (4)

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