

PKR Indians voice support for party, adviser
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Fifteen Indian Malaysian members of Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) have pledged their continuing support and loyalty to the opposition party and its adviser Anwar Ibrahim.

Ranging from new members to a vice-president, they rejected allegations that Indian members are leaving the party because of mistreatment.

"We heard that some parties are leaving, but I'm not," said Jerai division leader B Kalaivanar at a press conference this afternoon.

"Anwar stands firm, he wants everyone to struggle and reach their desired positions, and I will stand with him."

Kalaivanar is of the opinion that some members are being unreasonable by asking "what does the party give me?" when they have not done anything to get what they want.

Information Bureau deputy chief P Jenapala feels that those planning to leave the party are those who had been directed earlier by Barisan Nasional (BN) to join the party.

"They (BN) plant their people in the party and, come the general election, they pull out and go to the media carrying tales that Indians are mistreated," said Jenapala, adding that BN is playing racial politics with PKR.

"We are not like them, we unite under the same umbrella and we stand for one motto."

Vice-president R Sivarasa said he was dissatisfied with a recent report in The Star that Youth vice-head S Manikavasagam and Bera division Youth chief T Sarawanan are withdrawing from party elections. He said this has created the false impression that people are leaving the party.

"We (PKR) are creating a paradigm of multi-racial politics to break BN's racial politics. This is what BN is scared of."

Democratic rights

Commenting on Kepong chief KS Nallakarupan's decision to withdraw from the contest for vice-president in the party polls this weekend, Sivarasa said it is his democratic right to do so.

"We have no issues with him in the party. There are rumours and the media have been playing these negatively," he added.

On that note, contractor Ravi Nambiar who joined the party today, claimed that it is normal for people to leave a party due to misunderstandings.

"Anwar and Nallakarupan are buddies. It is normal for squabbles to occur between buddies, and we cannot make a big issue out of this," he said.

Nallakarupan had previously announced that he would vie for the vice-president post.

BN strategy

Sivarasa predicted that Anwar, who is running for the party presidency, will win the contest and that his victory would be bad news for the BN.

As such the BN would find ways to stop Anwar from keeping the post, he claimed in reference to the PKR plan to challenge a legal provision that bars anyone convicted from taking active part in politics for five years.

"Anwar has written to the Registrar of Societies to ask for an exemption that will enable him to hold office if he wins, and BN will try to stop this," said Sivarasa.

Explaining why the party wants current president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to continue playing a role, he said: "She held the fort when Anwar was in prison, she has too much valuable experience that should not go to waste."

He also speculated that the general election will be held in three months although the government has up to April 2009 to hold fresh polls.

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