

Anwar admits flaws in polls, vows sweeping probe
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PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim has finally broke his silence on the litany of complaints over the party polls and vowed that all complaints will be taken seriously.

"Were there weaknesses? Yes. Must there be improvements? Yes. And if there is evidence of fraud at any of the stages, will we take action? Yes.

"Will we cover up any of the cases? No. Will we taken action? Yes, but only on condition that there is evidence (of foul play)," Anwar told supporters in a ceramah at the ongoing PKR congress in the Petaling Jaya Civic Centre last night.

Anwar said that the party had not imposed any restrictions on candidates to voice their complaints to the elections committee and encouraged them to present their case.

zaid ibrahim pc 091110 mustaffa kamil ayub and zaidSeveral big names in PKR such as its two deputy presidency candidates - Zaid Ibrahim and Mustaffa Kamil Ayub - along with Youth chief candidate Badrul Hisham Shaharin has made broad accusations of irregularities in the polls.

Zaid has since left the party in protest but Mustaffa and Badrul Hisham have complained publicly about the alleged fraud.

The party headquarters have however shot down the complaints, claiming that the complainants had not provided enough evidence to facilitate investigations.

Success despite cost constraints

Anwar also defended the credibility of the polls, arguing that 70,000 out of the party's approximate 370,000 members had cast their ballots.

He also defended PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution Ismail and the central elections committee's running of the elections.

He said that unlike the federal Election Commission which has a budget of RM250 million to run the elections, the elections committee had only a fraction of this to spend for its elections.

pkc congress pc 271110 saifuddin nasutionWhen approached later, Saifuddin said that the cost of the elections was capped at RM500,000 and stressed that "we spent less than that".

Anwar also claimed that the allegations of fraud were being blown out of proportion by the media.

"Why were we wrong? It was because Utusan Malaysia said that we are wrong. But since when Utusan have ever said we were right?" asked Anwar with a chuckle.

Need to work on multiracialism

Meanwhile, Anwar said that the party elections had also revealed that some new party

members had yet to fully comprehend the party's multiracial agenda.

He said that this was based on his observation of various campaigns mounted by the candidates during the polls.

"Some members have only joined for two or three years and still see things through narrow racial perspectives... We still need to educate them," he said.

pkrcongresspc271110wanazizahanwarIn closing, Anwar urged his audience, mostly made up of delegates at the congress, not to lose sight the party's objectives in the upcoming general election.

He said that despite the setbacks, the party had a track record of making big gains after a series of small losses.

"When we lost Ijok (state assembly seat in 2007), we won Selangor (in 2008). We lost in Batu Sapi (on Nov 4), we can take Sabah (in the future)," said Anwar.

The two-day PKR congress will close later today with the official announcement of the new party leadership.

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