

Saifuddin: PKR polls more legit than Umno's
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PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution Ismail today fired back salvos at Umno leaders who had belittled the party's recently concluded direct elections, claiming that the PKR mandate has more legitimacy than Umno's.

pkrcongress pc 271110 saifuddin nasution "True, our voter turnout is just about eight percent out of our 400,000 members. 70,000 members voted in the divisional elections and 30,000 voted for the central leadership.

"But remember that (Umno Youth chief) Khairy Jamaluddin was only voted in by 0.035 percent of all movement members. He only had 300 voters out of the 800,000 Youth members," said Saifuddin (left) during his winding up speech at the PKR national delegates congress in Petaling Jaya.

"(Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak) said that our direct election is a gimmick. But their leadership only received the mandate of 0.07 percent out of the supposed 3.4 million Umno members," he said, poking holes at Umno's delegate voting system.

"That's why they are out of touch with the rakyat's sentiments. There are still the hardcore poor, people are still buying cooking oil in plastic bags and rice in half kilo supplies.

"Instead of looking after them, they would rather build a 100-storey tower," said Saifuddin to roars of laughter and applause from the delegates.

Yesterday, Khairy had rubbished the PKR poll's voter turnout, saying the newly elected leaders had no moral authority to lead.

'Jenapala clearly sacked'

Saifuddin also had the delegates in stitches when he explained the debacle surrounding former party deputy secretary-general P Jenapala.

Jenapala had recently and unsuccessfully filed a court injunction to stop the party from announcing the winner of the election for the deputy presidency post at the PKR congress.

NONE Jenapala has claimed that he has never been sacked from the party, while former secretary-general Salehuddin Hashim whose signatures appeared on Jenapala's dismissal letters filed a police report saying that his signatures were forged.

Saifuddin in defending PKR against these claims cracked the delegates up when he 'read' out a Tamil newspaper clipping (above) that carried a report that Jenapala had gone on to form a new political party.

PKR, like most other parties in the country, does not allow for dual party memberships and such would result in automatic sacking.

"Of course we will have to sack him. And regarding this issue of 'forgery'. How on earth am I supposed to know that this signature is forged? You're the one who signed it," said Saifuddin.

'Signature issue inconsequential'

Meanwhile, newly elected vice-president Tian Chua later told reporters that whether Salehuddin's signature was really forged or not was "inconsequential".

"I was in the political bureau meeting that had decided for the sacking of Jenapala when we found out that he had formed the new party. We then immediately informed Salehuddin to prepare the letter of termination for Jenapala's membership.

"He was instructed to prepare that letter as secretary-general. There is no free will involved here," said Chua.

"Whether he really signed it or not, is inconsequential. The crux of the matter is Jenapala," he said.

When pressed further, Tian said that even the courts are not worried about the matter since they have also thrown Jenapala's case out.

The High Court had dismissed Jenapala's suit last week, saying that they do not have the jurisdiction to intervene in the internal matters of political parties.

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