

Ex-PKR

Youth chief quits party

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KUALA LUMPUR: Former Parti Keadilan Rakyat Youth chief Ezam Mohd Noor has left the party, accusing its leaders of failing to resolve what he said was "narrow" and "petty" internal politicking.

He has not discounted the possibility that he would return to Umno.

Ezam, a former key associate of party adviser Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, said he resigned all his party posts in February but remained an ordinary member, hoping that "the leadership" would take note of his grievances and act on them.

In February, Ezam let go of his positions as PKR's Youth chief, Selangor deputy head and Shah Alam division chief.

He had at the time acknowledged that he had differences with several individuals in the party, including vice-president Azmin Ali.

Ezam and Azmin are key protégés of Anwar and were the prime movers of the Reformasi movement following Anwar's sacking as deputy prime minister.

Then, on April 14, Ezam submitted a letter to the party's Shah Alam division secretary to leave the party altogether.

He said his decision to quit PKR was mainly so that he could concentrate more on Gerak, an anti-corruption non-governmental organisation he had been leading for the past two years.

Asked whether there were any other reasons, he said: "After I resigned from all my party posts in February, I expressed to the party leadership my wish that they would address several pertinent issues regarding the party leadership, but I don't see any of my recommendations given due consideration."

Asked what these concerns were, Ezam said: "I wanted a more serious and sincere resolve among the leaders to unite the party and focus on the national agenda."

"But the party has been bogged by certain issues which have led to petty and a very narrow exclusive inner circle politicking."

"Suffice for me to say that the leadership as a whole does not have the resolve (to sort out the internal problems)."

When asked whether he felt that he would be letting down Anwar, Ezam said: "It is up to him (Anwar) whether or not to ad-



Ezam Mohd Noor says he wants to concentrate on Gerak

dress the concerns I've raised."

Asked about his feelings for Anwar now, he said: "As chairman of Gerak, I am all for anyone who works against corruption, even if the measures come from the government or from Pak Lah (Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi)."

Ezam said he would be going to the prime minister's office on Friday to submit evidence of a "high-profile" corruption case.

He said he did not have an appointment, but was optimistic that a representative from Abdullah's office would accept the documents.

While he had in the past repeatedly discounted any possibility of rejoining Umno, he was, when asked the question again yesterday, seemingly more open.

"In politics, anything is possible, but at the moment I want to concentrate on Gerak," said Ezam, a former Petaling Jaya Selatan Umno deputy division chief.

Ezam claimed that several "friends" from both Umno as well as Pas had approached him and asked him to consider joining their parties.

"I appreciate their gestures, but for now I want to concentrate on the campaign against corruption beyond partisan lines."

The impact of Ezam's departure on PKR remains to be seen. But the past several years have seen a slew of departures of several key founder members who were Anwar's close associates.

The most recent cases that came to light were of former secretary-general Anuar Tahir, supreme council member Saari Sungib and vice-president Saifuddin Nasution Ismail.

All three are now in Pas, with Anuar recently appointed to Pas' central committee.

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