

Damage control at PKR

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Party leaders criticise Ezam over his claims and resignation

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PETALING JAYA: Parti Keadilan Rakyat leaders are trying to do damage control following the resignation of their former Youth leader Ezam Mohd Nor and the devastating allegations he has made.

PKR leaders such as secretary-general Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim and information chief Tian Chua are keeping mum but Youth chief Shamsul Iskandar has come out strongly, calling Ezam "a traitor."

"He is like one of the main characters in the Chinese classic *Romance*

of the Three Kingdoms – very courageous and daring but at the end of the day, he betrayed the kingdom.

"Ezam has behaved like a traitor to our party and struggles," said Shamsul.

Ezam, who announced on Monday that he had quit the party, is the second high-profile resignation from PKR since the party congress last month. Former deputy president Abdul Rahman Othman resigned to join PAS earlier this month.

In resigning, Ezam had criticised Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for allegedly practising dictatorial politics and said vice-president Azmin Ali's

power and influence was detrimental to the party.

Ezam, who was Anwar's former political secretary, was also unhappy with Azmin's control over Anwar on a number of political issues.

Shamsul accused Ezam of behaving like a pawn of the ruling party.

"He was committed to our struggle but now I suspect he is part of an agenda to undermine Datuk Seri Anwar and PKR with the general election so near. His motive is clear and his timing is perfect," he said.

Meanwhile, Selangor Youth vice-head Khairul Anuar said that if Ezam was sincere about reforming the

party, he would have taken on Azmin from within the party instead of quitting to attack PKR leaders from outside.

"It is wrong of him to say that Anwar is a dictator because PKR is democratic. This is what happens when people join the party because they believe in a personality rather than the bigger struggle," said Khairul.

Khalid said he needed time to come out with a consensus statement.

Chua declined to comment on Ezam's allegations but said Ezam wanted to disassociate himself from PKR so as to give greater credibility to his anti-corruption NGO, Gerak.