

Anwar denies meddling

The Star - 25/5/2007

'I only told those vying for posts that I won't campaign for them'

PETALING JAYA: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has denied being the "hidden hand" behind the aspirants for key posts in the Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) elections.

"People are using my name for their own purposes. If I were the hidden hand, would people be contesting against me (for the president's post)? I did not even tell (Abdul) Rahman Othman to contest or not to contest," he said.

His wife and incumbent president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and former deputy president Rahman are the other two candidates vying for the president's post in the party election this Saturday.

Anwar, who is slated to win the post, has come under the spotlight

»If I were the hidden hand, would people be contesting against me?«

DATUK SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM

for allegedly exerting his influence over who should contest for some of the key posts.

Allegations of meddling in the elections have caused ripples ahead of a keenly contested poll.

Datuk K. Nallakaruppan, claiming that he felt betrayed, has threatened to resign from the party which he joined only in August last year at the

invitation of his "good friend" Anwar.

Nallakaruppan, who received the second highest number of nominations among those vying for the three vice-president posts, said that Anwar had asked him to withdraw from the contest.

Anwar was also accused of meddling in the contest at the Youth wing level, drawing criticism from

former Youth chief Ezam Mohd Nor.

Former deputy president nominee Azmin Ali was also said to have been pressured against challenging incumbent Dr Syed Husin Ali for the post, even though the former has denied it.

Anwar said all he did was advise those who wanted to vie for posts that he would not campaign for them and that they should be prepared to accept defeat and stay committed to the party.

"Those claiming that I am interfering should provide evidence to the party election committee. The fact that the mainstream media is so interested in our election shows that the party is not irrelevant as some people have claimed," he said.