

Zafrul's ministership not affected

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But unity govt yet to discuss his application to join PKR, says PM

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz's application to join PKR has not been discussed by parties in the unity government yet, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

But, the Prime Minister said Tengku Zafrul's position as Investment, Trade and Industry Minister is not affected, given his good performance as a minister.

"Tengku Zafrul carried out his tasks as minister very well. Investments are in the hundreds of billions and he has led his ministry well.

"Now, he chose to apply (to PKR), we haven't discussed anything yet. Let him perform his hajj pilgrimage first. Let us refrain from unhealthy interpretations.

"For PKR, we have to discuss this with our friends. But, his position as minister is not affected," said Anwar when met after the closing ceremony of the KL International Book Fair (KLIBF) at the World Trade

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Centre yesterday.

Anwar also denied there will be a Cabinet reshuffle.

"Two ministers have resigned, now give them time to reflect on what they want to do. Now they are on leave. I don't think we should preempt.

"The government is functioning as usual," he said.

At the same time, Anwar also said it is still too early to discuss remarks by Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi that another Cabinet position should be given to Barisan Nasional following Tengku Zafrul's resignation from the party.

"We have not discussed it. It is too early," he added.

On Saturday, Ahmad Zahid said Tengku Zafrul's exit would mean Umno is left with six ministers from the previous seven.



Young minds, big brains:

Anwar (left) supporting his grandson Mohamad Khairul (seated, left) during a chess tournament at the KLIBF in Kuala Lumpur.
— IZZRAFIQ ALIAS/The Star

On Friday, Tengku Zafrul said he was resigning as Umno supreme council member, as Kota Raja division leader and a party member.

He said he will be starting the process of joining PKR.

His decision comes two days after two Cabinet ministers from PKR resigned – Datuk Seri Rafizi Ramli (Economy) and Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad (Natural Resources

and Environmental Sustainability).

On another matter, Anwar announced that some 400,000 teachers nationwide will be given book vouchers in an effort to promote the reading habit.

The Prime Minister said last year, students attending KLIBF received book vouchers worth RM100.

"This year, we will give teachers

as well. For next year, we have to look at how the economy does first," he said in a closing speech for KLIBF yesterday.

Anwar hoped that the initiative would inculcate the reading habit among teachers and students who attended the programme.

He said more details on the book voucher would be announced soon by the Education Ministry.