

Analysts: Anwar trying to reduce divisions

KUALA LUMPUR: PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim wants to head off any rifts in the party by endorsing Datuk Seri Rafizi Ramli for re-election as deputy president in the party election in May.

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu political analyst Professor Dr Mohd Izani Mohd Zain said the move was crucial to prevent internal conflicts and factionalism.

More importantly, the endorsement would allow Rafizi to focus on his duties as economy minister, he said.

"This is Anwar's approach to reinforce unity in PKR and prevent clashes. There were factions for Anwar and Rafizi in past PKR elections.

"But with the establishment of

the unity government, we are seeing greater cohesion.

"That is why Anwar needs to maintain good relations and support Rafizi," he told *Berita Harian*.

At the Selangor PKR's annual general meeting on Friday, Anwar expressed support for Rafizi, saying that the Pandan member of parliament should be given space to carry out his duties and responsibilities.

Izani said Anwar and Rafizi strengthening their ties was crucial for the party as it prepared for the 16th General Election, which was less than three years away.

Dr A. Aziz Azizam, a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi Mara, said the lack of a contest for the top two positions in PKR would reduce competition and minimise divisions.

He said leadership contests often resulted in factions

"If that happens, it could weaken PKR as the party needs to demonstrate stability to the public. It is important to note that

PKR is now approaching the midterm of its governance (in the federal government).

"Thus, the best option is to al-

low leadership positions to be uncontested as this would ease internal tensions."

But, Aziz said, uncontested leadership positions could raise the question of the lack of credible candidates willing to challenge incumbents.

"This indirectly reflects a decline in the emergence of new leaders, raising concerns about the party's sustainability.

"Moreover, senior leaders must remain neutral, as any perceived bias could signal to the public that the absence of challenge is not due to genuine support, but rather pressure exerted on potential challengers.

"It is important to remember that an internal 'authoritarian' culture has the potential to erode public confidence," said Aziz.



Dr A. Aziz Azizam