

Anwar urged to focus on healing party rifts

JOHOR BARU: PKR party president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim must move to unite party members, following Nurul Izzah Anwar's unseating of Datuk Seri Rafizi Ramli for the deputy president's post, says a party veteran.

Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said Anwar is not just "Nurul Izzah's father, but also father to every member" and has the responsibility to foster reconciliation among those who may have been hurt by the party election results.

"Datuk Seri, there are many delegates here. Some are here for (Nurul) Izzah, and some are for Rafizi. There are bound to be those who are 'terbakar hati' (hurting inside), and we can't always see it.

"You carry a huge responsibility as a father figure," he said.

While others were celebrating their victories on Friday evening, Saifuddin Nasution said he chose to remain by Rafizi's side.

Choking back tears, he expressed concern that PKR will lose Rafizi following the party polls.

"I have to admit, I am afraid of losing him from the party," he said, recalling how the former PKR deputy president had previously served as his speechwriter back in 2008.

Saifuddin Nasution said that although he may not always see eye to eye with Rafizi, he regarded him as a brother.

"We may not always agree, but we respect each other's points of

view," he said, reminding the Prime Minister of his promise to set time aside on party matters.

"If you don't follow through, I'll be the first to call you out. I have nothing to lose. I'm already 62 and have lost more elections than I've won," he joked.

PKR vice-president Chang Lih Kang expressed confidence that those who lost in the polls will continue to serve the party.

"This party election is not a matter of life and death. It's a friendly match. I believe those who have lost will not stop fighting for the party's cause and the country," he said.

On social media, Rafizi said he will not dwell too much on his defeat.

In thanking his supporters,

Rafizi expressed gratitude to those who stood by him during the campaign.

"I have run many election campaigns before. Never in any of them have so many nameless people echoed the message so loudly, yet the result was so resounding in its rejection," he said in a statement on X yesterday.

Rafizi said he felt a great deal of relief that he could return to living a private life, away from the shenanigans of the corridors of power.

He reserved his final thanks for grassroots members and supporters who continued to believe in the party's founding vision, many of whom he said had expressed heartfelt pleas for him to stay on.