

Anwar brushes off question about possible KJ return to Cabinet

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim appeared amused when asked about rumours that former minister Khairy Jamaluddin might return to the Cabinet.

“Really? Who told you that?” Anwar quipped when a reporter posed the question at the National Development Awards and Symposium organised by the Implementation Coordination Unit of the Prime Minister’s Department. Speculation has been swirling

in political circles that a former Umno member and minister could make a comeback under the Madani administration.

The talk of a possible Cabinet reshuffle has also been fuelled by the impending end of senatorships for several ministers and the recent resignation of another.

Among the Senate terms set to expire in December are those of Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Investment, Trade and Industry

Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz, and Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na’im Mokhtar.

Khairy, a former Umno Youth chief, served as the youth and sports minister from 2013 to 2018 under the Barisan Nasional government.

During the political upheaval and Covid-19 pandemic, he was appointed science, technology and innovation minister under

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin’s administration from March 2020 to August 2021.

He later became health minister under Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob’s administration, serving until 2022.

Talk of Khairy’s possible political return intensified recently, with some speculating that he may rejoin Umno ahead of the Sabah state elections at the end of November.

Khairy was expelled from

Umno in 2023 for breaching party disciplinary rules during the 15th General Election campaign.

On Nov 4, Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi denied claims that he had invited Khairy to rejoin the party.

Rumours of reconciliation were reignited after both men were seen attending the same wedding, but Ahmad Zahid clarified that their meeting was purely coincidental and did not involve any political discussions.