

Umno strife will lead to early polls, says PKR

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PENANG: The spat between Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his successor Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi took centre stage at Parti Keadilan Rakyat's 3rd national congress here yesterday.

It figured prominently in the speech of party deputy president Dr Syed Husin Ali, who jointly opened the meetings of the party's Wanita and Youth wings here.

Youth chief Ezam Mohd Nor also dwelt at length on the matter in his keynote address at the wing's meeting.

Dr Syed Husin told the 712 delegates that the "civil war" in

Umno might result in the holding of a snap general election next year.

"The elections might also be held early as Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (party adviser) will be eligible to contest after April 2008," he said.

Ezam went a step further by predicting that the general election would be held in the first quarter of next year.

"It will be held early because of the many uncertainties in the country following Dr Mahathir's scathing attacks on Abdullah," he told newsmen.

He said the party would begin mobilising its election machinery immediately after the congress.

In his speech, Dr Syed Husin

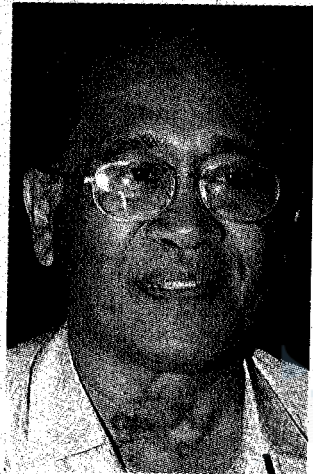
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said the party would continue to use all means, including holding street demonstrations, to protest against government policies.

The 458 Youth delegates also gave a rousing welcome to businessman Datuk K. S. Nallakaruppan, 54, who made his debut at the congress.

Nallakaruppan, a former MIC Youth deputy chief, submitted his application to join the party to party president Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail on Aug 20.

Ezam said Nallakaruppan would be an asset to the party.

"We will give him space, but whatever steps he takes must be in accordance with the party's constitution," he said.



Dr Syed Husin: Said the party would continue to hold street protests