

'PKR spat won't affect Anwar's chances of becoming next PM'

KAJANG: The spat between some in PKR's top leadership and party members will not jeopardise party president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's chances of becoming prime minister.

PKR secretary-general Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail reiterated that the candidate to take over as prime minister after Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad steps down had been decided by consensus by Pakatan Harapan before the 14th General Election.

He said the matter was dependent on the number of parliamentary seats held by PH component parties, in terms of supporting Anwar as the next prime minister.

He said by that standard, PKR was the major party in PH.

The coalition also comprises Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, DAP and Parti Amanah Negara, while Parti Warisan Sabah and United Progressive Kinabalu Organisation are friendly parties.

"Will PH change its consensus? During the general election, Anwar was still in prison and did not even contest.

"It was discussed with Dr Mahathir and he agreed that the next PM will be Anwar.

"Secondly, who has the majority in Parliament? So the most important thing in determining Anwar's position is PH's consensus and the MPs who form the majority.

"It is up to them (PH and MPs), not the party (PKR)," Saifuddin said after launching Tesco's Buy Malaysia Product campaign at Tesco Extra here yesterday.

Observers said the dispute between PKR vice-president Zuraida Kamaruddin and the party's higher-ups, which stemmed from the clash between Anwar and his deputy, Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, would affect the PKR leader's chances of being chosen as the next prime minister.

Zuraida is a staunch supporter of Azmin and has criticised those who criticise him.

On Jan 28, Saifuddin sent a letter of demand to Zuraida over remarks she allegedly made against him at a dinner hosted by Azmin's faction at Renaissance Hotel



Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail and Tesco Malaysia product director Kenneth Chuah (left) at the launch of the Buy Malaysia Product Campaign at Tesco Extra in Kajang yesterday. PIC BY SYARAFIQ ABD SAMAD

Kuala Lumpur last month.

The dinner was said to be a protest against Anwar's camp as it was held a few hours after the party's national congress ended in Melaka.

Saifuddin said he would let the party's disciplinary bureau deal with 11 rallies defending Zuraida across the country and one rally condemning her in front of PKR's

headquarters on Wednesday.

He said no problem would arise despite threats from some party members saying they would quit PKR if Zuraida was punished over her speech at the dinner.

"Part of my work as secretary-general is to monitor the number of applications to join the party. Every week before the political bureau meeting, there are about

10,000 applications.

"We only need 30,000 more people to join the party before we reach one million members."

He was referring to reports saying that Persatuan Penggerak Muafakat Nasional Pulau Pinang chairman Shahrudin Mohd Shariff claimed that 10,000 grassroots members would leave PKR with Zuraida if she was sacked.