

'Khusrin came last in job interview'

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The federal government's nominee for the Selangor state secretary's post was ranked last among six candidates interviewed by a state-appointed panel, a state government source said.

According to the source, outgoing Selangor Islamic Religious Department (Jais) head Mohd Khusrin Munawi failed to impress the panel during the interview.

"Khusrin could not even speak English properly. In fact, he could not even speak Arabic properly, despite being the Jais director," the highly-placed source said.

Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim had appointed a special panel - NONEcomprising state assembly speaker Teng Chang Khim and excos Dr Xavier Jayakumar and Hasan Mohamed Ali - to interview Khusrin (left), along with five other senior civil servants, several weeks ago.

The source said state Economic Planning Unit director Noordin Sulaiman came in tops, followed by Petaling Jaya mayor Roslan Sakiman and Subang Jaya Municipal Council president Mohammad Adnan Md Ikshan.

Following that, these three names were forwarded to the palace on Dec 17 to seek the Sultan's decision on the replacement for outgoing state secretary Ramli Mahmud.

What criteria the panel used in its selection is uncertain.

Khusrin had read economics at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and is scheduled to start work as state secretary on Jan 1.

No time limit to hand over the shortlist

Meanwhile, the Menteri Besar's Office rubbished claims by the Selangor Sultan's private secretary Mohamad Munir Bani that the state government was late in handing over its list of candidates for the post.

Khalid's political secretary Faekah Husin insisted that there was no time limit or deadline in appointing a state secretary, especially since Ramli's contract only ends on March 20 next year.

"Although the setting up of the special panel is not compulsory, the Pakatan Rakyat state government has been putting good practices into place, whereby the appointments of senior positions are done transparently, freely and responsibly.

"The MB does not want to be the sole decider in appointing the top civil servant in the state," Faekah (right) said.

It was reported in Berita Harian that Munir had blamed the Pakatan government for being tardy in handing over its candidates list, hence the Sultan's approval of the candidate

suggested by the federal government earlier.

Faekah also called on civil societies in the state to perform a solat hajat for "wisdom and strength" for the Sultan in handling this "miscommunication", and appealed for the people of Selangor to remain calm.

Tumultuous relationship

Mohd Khusrin's thorny relationship with the state government stemmed largely from his ban on speakers at mosques and surau without Jais' permission, among others.

The most prominent case involved Jais' decision to take legal action against former Perlis mufti Mohd Asri Zainal Abidin for giving a religious talk at a bungalow in Ampang last year.

Recently, Khusrin issued a warning to the committee members of Surau Al Ehsan, Gombak, for inviting PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang, a renowned religious scholar, to a speaking function on Nov 22.

He had also suspended the committee of the Al Huda surau in Kajang for allowing Serdang MP Teo Nie Ching, a non-Muslim, to enter its premises during a breaking-of-fast function.

Some lawmakers have gone as far as to call the appointment of Khusrin as state secretary "a form of sabotage" of Selangor by the federal government.

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