

MB downplays Khusrin's role as state secretary
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Despite tomorrow being his first day at work and his oath-taking ceremony scheduled to take place before the Sultan next Thursday, federal appointee Mohd Khusrin Munawi's position as Selangor secretary remains uncertain.

"I will have to meet with my executive council members first and discuss the matter. We need to sort out the actual powers of the state," said Selangor Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim to reporters in Ampang Jaya today.

He was responding to a question about the matter in a press conference after awarding 5A notices to about 220 applicants from the Kuala Langat district for land titles.

Asked if he is going to administer the oath of secrecy that Khusrin must take before being allowed to be privy to state secrets and participate in the day-to-day running of the state, Khalid was evasive.

"I don't know, I have to consult my excos first.

"I shall also talk to the sultan about this and other things. It is the duty of the MB to report to the Sultan. An MB is answerable to the Sultan," added Khalid.

The MB had tried to meet the sultan on the matter since Khusrin's appointment was announced, but was unsuccessful as the ruler was on leave.

Khalid said further that the work of an MB is like that of a football coach, who is entitled to choose the players on his team if he is going to do a proper job as the chief minister of the state.

"I cannot deliver good performance if you dictate who plays on my team and then give me a person who can only kick with his right foot."

'Follow the drama'

"How would Prime Minister Najib (Abdul Razak) feel if he cannot choose who is to be the chief secretary to the government? Imagine his feelings," said the Bandar Tun Razak MP.

Khalid however downplayed the matter as being just one facet of the state government's activities saying it was not of great import to the big picture.

"Even without a state secretary, the government continues to function. This is a small matter," he argued.

The PKR leader said further that it was an internal administrative matter that he was loathe to discuss in the open.

"I'd rather we do not talk of this in public. We are still discussing the matter and I do not want to encourage speculation.

"You will have to wait for what happens and follow the drama," jibed Khalid.

Appointment 'undemocratic'

Meanwhile PSM has condemned Khusrin's unilateral appointment as disrespectful to the Selangor government as the elected administrator of the state in accordance with the country's democratic principles.

The selection of the state secretary without any consultation with the elected state government represents an act of contempt," said PSM general secretary S Arutchelvan (right) in a statement today.

"It ignores the conventional practice where the Public Services Department is required to forward suitable candidates for the menteri besar's approval before the choice is submitted to the sultan to be accepted," he said.

Arutchelvan said the appointment was therefore questionable, adding, "We will not be surprised if the motive behind Khusrin's appointment is an attempt at illegal power grabbing in Selangor, considering the extraordinary powers of the state secretary, such as we have witnessed in Perak," said the PSM secretary.

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