

Chief sec defends decision, MB's consent not needed
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Chief secretary to the federal government Mohd Sidek Hassan has stepped in to dispel claims that the state government was never consulted over the appointment of Mohd Khusrin Munawi as the Selangor state secretary.

In a statement late this evening, Sidek said that the state government had been informed through Khusrin's predecessor, Ramli Mahmud.

Sidek (left) said that the Public Service Department (PSD) informed Ramli of three of its nominees for the post through two letters dated Nov 23 and Dec 3, 2010.

He said that the names were submitted for the consideration and approval of the state government. The Dec 3 letter also requested that the palace give its consent to the choice of state secretary.

"The state secretary (Ramli) at the time replied through a letter dated Dec 13, 2010 to the PSD to inform that the three names have been presented to the sultan.

"The sultan had consented to Khusrin's appointment as the new Selangor state secretary," said Sidek.

Copies of the three letters were attached to Sidek's statement.

Khalid's administration had staunchly opposed Khusrin's appointment, arguing that it was not consulted on the matter and that it was difficult to work with him based on his track record.

Earlier today, Khalid told reporters that a senior government official had gone "through the back door" to submit a list of names for the palace's approval without his knowledge.

Courtesy for sultan, but not MB

Sidek also provided lengthy legal arguments on why Khusrin's appointment was valid.

He said that under Section 52 (1) of the Laws of the Constitution of Selangor 1959, the stipulated "appropriate service commission" in the appointment of the state secretary refers to the Public Service Commission (PSC) by virtue of Article 132 (2) (c) and Article 139 of the Federal Constitution.

In addition to this, Sidek cites Section 5 (B) (i) of Article 144 of the Federal Constitution grants authority to the public service promotions board to exercise the powers of the PSC.

Some Pakatan Rakyat leaders have argued that the appointment of the state secretary was not vested in the PSC but a similar commission formed by the state.

Following this, Sidek pointed out the state constitution does not stipulate that the sultan's consent must be obtained on the state secretary's appointment.

"Thus, the consent of the sultan in the Khusrin's appointment is not a legal requirement under the state constitution.

"Instead, it is more of an act of courtesy for the sultan to consent to a nominee for the state secretary, who will become the chief administrator for his highness' state," said Sidek.

"In this process, regardless of the names of the nominees, if it is presented to sultan for his approval, it is merely out of courtesy only."

PM not referred to

Sidek also vehemently denied that his decision to appoint Khusrin was out of political considerations.

"In the selection process, I did not consider political input and did not refer to any members of the federal administration, including the prime minister.

"The selection process was conducted professionally and it only involved the chief secretary and the state government," he said.

He stressed that Khusrin (right) - once a special aide to former Umno MB Muhammad Muhammad Taib - along with two other candidates, were chosen based on their qualifications, experience, personal attributes and suitability.

Khusrin is scheduled to be sworn in tomorrow morning before the sultan.

However, plans are underway by the state government to amend the state constitution to provide the menteri besar and the palace the final say on the choice of the state secretary.