

**Is S'gor fighting a losing battle over Khusrin?**  
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Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim and his government may be trying all they can to resist the appointment of state secretary Mohamed Khusrin Munawi.

But many political analysts see it as a losing battle with the Pakatan Rakyat government unlikely to find a way to kick the man, deemed hostile to their cause, out of office.

For Monash University political scientist James Chin, however, if the Pakatan government is going to go down, it may as well go down with guns blazing.

"Things have gone beyond their hands, and it seems clear that the sultan and BN are on the same side, and I think (former Perak MB) Nizar (Jamaluddin) is right in saying that this is the beginning of a coup," he said.

And just like in Perak, he said Pakatan should fight tooth and nail and in the process make a roaring political statement that it is fighting for the legitimate autonomy of the state.

"There is no point for the Selangor government to bury the hatchet and try to work with Khusrin, because the 'hatchet' will be pulled out from beneath them," he said.

Already, Khalid's government is protesting loud and clear by disallowing the new state secretary from taking an oath of secrecy, thus barring him from attending executive council meetings.

It also announced its unhappiness by requesting a state assembly meeting to amend the section of the state constitution that had allowed Khusrin to be appointed behind the MB's back.

But this will ultimately be a useless endeavour, said UKM political scientist Mohammad Agus Yusoff, what more with the Selangor opposition leader calling for a BN boycott of the assembly meeting.

"What is the point? Pakatan Rakyat does not have two-thirds majority (required to amend the constitution) and will not get two-thirds.

"Any bill or law proposed to go around this will also be useless because the constitution remains the highest law in the state," he said.

Selangor Pakatan controls 35 seats in the assembly, three short of a two-thirds majority.

**Collision course with the palace**

Proposing a constitutional amendment to return the power to appoint three key posts - the state secretary, legal advisor and financial officer - to the state and the sultan is unlikely to keep Pakatan off the collision course with the palace.

On Tuesday, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah made no bones about his displeasure by

delivering a hard-hitting speech, that most felt was directed at the state government.

"Going against the appointment now is interpreted as going against the palace, and this would cost them the Malay vote," said International Islamic University Malaysia political science department head Tunku Mohar Tunku Muhd Mokhtar.

As such, the best thing to do now, said Tunku Mohar, is to go ahead with the state assembly, not so much with the purpose of amending the constitution but to make a political statement.

"They can show that they tried, but didn't succeed, and then just carry on and try to cooperate with Khusrin," he said.

For both Mohammad Agus and Tunku Mohar, resisting cooperation would only result in a lose-lose proposition for the state government.

Worse still, it would lead to a dysfunctional government, where there is disconnect between the executive and the administration.

This, he said, has been the experience of Kelantan when the executive resisted the appointment of a state secretary by the state Public Service Commission, that led to an uneasy relationship with the sultan and the federal government.

"The result is that the state loses - administration is faulty, development is halted, land issues are unresolved, planning at exco level is not implemented," he said.

### **Public support with S'gor gov't but...**

All the same, Mohammad Agus said, Pakatan has so much distrust towards Khusrin - who is former special aide to ex-menteri besar Muhammad Muhammad Taib - that the relationship is beyond salvage.

"Khusrin will have access to all the files, and all the government planning, everything... there could be leaks. Whether or not this happens is another issue - the problem is public perception because Khusrin has been seen as hostile towards Pakatan policies," he said.

As such, he said, the best and seemingly only way out is to negotiate a compromise with the Public Services Commission, which at this point is the only commission able to retract Khusrin's appointment.

"Right now, public sentiments are siding with the Selangor government. Nizar too had a lot of support when he started his fight, but after a while people get bored and tired of confrontation. The best way is to compromise," said Mohammad Agus.