

## **'MB resisted party advice to curb internal sabotage'**

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**by Aidila Razak**

Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim did not give in to party pressure when it came to state governance, be it in awarding contracts to party members or in curbing internal sabotage.

According to former PKR deputy president Syed Husin Ali, the MB had refused to replace civil servants appointed into key roles by the former BN administration.

The MB also refused to listen to advice by PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim and Syed Husin on the handling of sand mining, which was used as ammunition for a salvo by the BN state opposition.

"Anwar and I had from the onset held discussions with the MB over the need to revamp the mechanism for the mining and selling of sand. Sadly, (Abdul Khalid) was steadfast with his views and did not waver one bit," he said in his much-anticipated memoir.

Syed Husin said Abdul Khalid, chosen over then-Selangor PKR chief and MB-hopeful Azmin Ali (right), had so much faith in the civil service that delays in service did not convince him that reshuffles were vital.

"He believed (the civil servants) will change and be professional... but this did not happen among several officials from the federal level who were assigned to the state," he said.

The veteran politician said some of key personnel who were appointed by previous MB Mohd Khir Toyo were still "informing their previous masters".

He said that there was also word that "Umno was using civil servants to sabotage Selangor government efforts".

Federal appointees, he claimed, had also received directives to not cooperate with the state government.

Convinced that sabotage was rife, Syed Husin, who was then holding the powerful deputy president post, said he written long notes on the matter and sent a memorandum to the MB to support his case.

"I even wrote an article about such challenges faced by the Selangor government. It was published in a book on reforming the Selangor government but there was no impact," he said.

Party activists sidelined for contracts

Bearing the brunt, said Syed Husin, were investors who at times found themselves waiting up to two years for approvals for projects in Selangor.

"For them, time is money... Their anger and frustration was used by Umno-BN to show the Pakatan government in a bad light," he said.

Also frustrated with the MB's ways were party activists, who had hoped for contracts to be awarded to them once Pakatan took over.

“(Abdul Khalid) was principally against entertaining requests for assistance by party activists. (The activists) were disappointed and started to feel enmity against the MB,” he said.

Admitting that some of the activists were ill-qualified, Syed Husin said the qualified ones were equally sidelined.

Adding salt to the wound, he pointed out that BN supporters won contracts upon recommendation from directors in government-linked companies who were old faces from the previous BN government.

Despite all the complaints, however, Syed Husin said no one could dispute the fact that Abdul Khalid was a “corruption-free MB” along with other Pakatan Rakyat MBs and chief minister.

He added that Abdul Khalid’s government had also for two years running gained praises from the Auditor-General for having the best financial governance, with Penang following suit.

“In Selangor, obvious policies are taken to democratise the economy, by making large expenditures for the welfare of the rakyat,” he said.

Syed Husin observed that Abdul Khalid was popular with the people, making it difficult for Umno-BN to cut him down.

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