

**Kedah PAS giants battle, allies stay away**  
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Kedah PKR representative says that it is not as though the state administration is collapsing, while his DAP colleague describes the ongoing conflict as a "constitutional crisis".

Whatever it is, PAS allies in Pakatan Rakyat Kedah are distancing themselves from the current political crisis plaguing Menteri Besar Azizan Abdul Razak's government.

Some are waving off the issue as a "small matter", that the situation is an administrative problem and would not impact the state or the Kedah Pakatan alliance.

PKR Bukit Selambau assemblyperson S Manikumar (left) says that his party prefers to stay neutral in this war among PAS giants in the state.

He said the bad publicity in the media has made the situation to look as if the state is on the verge of breaking apart at the seams.

"But Kedah is still around, it has not disappeared. The Kedah Pakatan administration is also still around, so what is so critical about this?" he asked.

"This matter involves the Kedah MB and two state executive councillors. Excos come and go, they are replaceable. All of us are replaceable if we decide to leave," he added.

Battle-hardened Azizan

Azizan has been fighting off heavy criticism and calls for him to step down, by saying that speculation on two exco members said to have rejected their appointments, will be addressed on Tuesday.

BN-linked The Star and Utusan Malaysia, had reported that the Kedah government was roiling in turmoil following, what they claimed as the rejection of their appointments by four exco members.

They were named as Phahrolrazi Zawawi, Ismail Salleh, Dr Hamdan Mohamed Khalib and Taulan Mat Rasul.

Meanwhile, Manikumar said that eventually whatever decision Azizan arrives at would be abided by all parties in Pakatan.

He pointed out that political friction and struggles such as these are normal occurrences in all parties in Malaysia.

He admitted that the infighting is fueled by differences in opinion among PAS leaders, leading to feelings of dissatisfaction among some.

But he stressed that the matter would be resolved soon, especially by Tuesday during the state exco swearing-in ceremony, led by Azizan.

However, he offered a small piece of advice to Azizan, urging him to look into his party matters soon, especially to resolve the problem of clashing views over crucial policy issues in the state.

"If he wants to remain MB, he must ensure there is good teamwork and make sure we practise consensus and reach collective decisions on policy issues.

"He should also listen to the state excos. With this, he can regain his strength and support in Kedah," he added.

'Constitutional crisis ' turning grave

Manikumar's DAP counterpart, Lee Guan Aik, however, considers the recent political storm in Kedah as a "constitutional crisis which has reached a serious level".

But like Manikumar, he said DAP will remain neutral and not step into in the conflict as it is PAS' internal squabble.

He urged Azizan to speedily resolve the issue as it has already negatively impacted on the Kedah Pakatan, especially with the general election looming large in the horizon.

"This should not be happening. They are PAS' internal problems, and should not be allowed to spill over into state government matters," Lee (right) told Malaysiakini.

He added that Azizan should exercise wisdom when dealing with his state excos, including those from his own party.

He also said that Azizan may have his own reasons for acting the way he did, yet he must employ caution so to prevent conflicts that would eventually prove disparaging for Pakatan.

Azizan is famous for openly challenging Pakatan policies.

His latest publicity antic was officially supporting the 1971 Universities and University Colleges Act, irking other Pakatan leaders who have been championing the struggle to abolish the restrictive law.

Azizan, too, has been alleged to be autocratic in his leadership style, and for ticking off Pakatan allies, telling them to lay off interfering in his administration.

Kedah bloggers have been charging him of appointing Umno-linked chief executive officers to several state-owned agencies, an allegation yet to be verified.

They have also claimed that the last straw was when Azizan "abused" his executive powers by approving a RM1 billion contract for an Umno crony.

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