

Khairy's PUNB post 'will not benefit bumis'
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Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin's reported appointment as chairperson of Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Bhd (PUNB) will only take the bumiputera community a step backward, says Selangor Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim.

This is because, once again, political affiliation has become the basis of an appointment to a professional post, Khalid said in a statement today.

Khalid (right), a founder of PUNB, said the federal government-owned company mandated to develop bumiputera entrepreneurs in strategic and high potential businesses has been led by professionals who are free of political interest.

"While there have been politicians at the policy-making level, they did not interfere with the operations of the company," claimed Khalid, who had helmed many government-owned companies before venturing into politics.

"Even the boards of directors are made up of experienced professionals who have no conflict of interest in either being part of political parties or politically-affiliated groups."

Khalid was the CEO of government-controlled fund management firm Pemodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB), under which PUNB was formed in 1991.

He later became the CEO of Kumpulan Guthrie Bhd, from 1995 to 2003.

Current PUNB chairperson Abu Bakar Mohd Noor - who has held the post since 1998 - is a technocrat who began his career as a government servant, before moving into the corporate world.

'Najib has failed Malaysia'

This group of professional bumiputeras has worked hard to take PUNB to where it is today, noted Khalid.

For this reason, he said, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak should not demean their efforts by appointing Khairy, who has not shown that he has the capability or experience in running a successful corporate body.

"Najib has yet again failed Malaysia by prioritising political links instead of professionalism. What he is doing does not augur well for the future of the bumiputera community and Malaysia.

"In building the nation, our leaders have to look beyond political affiliation, which Najib has not done in this appointment."

To date, both Khairy (right) - who won the Rembau parliamentary seat in the 2008 general election - and PUNB have yet to confirm the appointment, which has been reported by the media.

If true, then it will be Khairy's first appointment to a government-related entity since he won the Umno Youth chief's post in 2009. Although this post often comes with a ministerial post, Khairy was not selected for one.

His deputy, Razali Ibrahim and competitor in the party polls, Mukhriz Mahathir, have both been appointed deputy ministers.

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