

Khalid: Principles, willpower key to my survival
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Coming into politics from the corporate sector, Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim is well known for his experience in managing a big business, but his corporate style is also said to be lacking in political savvy.

Barely two years after the 2008 elections, it was widely reported that Bukit Antarabangsa state assemblyperson Azmin Ali (left) was eyeing the menteri besar's post and reportedly was planning a coup to oust Khalid.

Though it did not materialise following the intervention of PKR de facto Leader Anwar Ibrahim, Khalid's post has been said to be unstable since then.

When asked about this in a joint interview with selected media last Thursday, Khalid agreed that politics was all about change.

"You are a reporter with all the experience, you know that politics is not a very....," said Khalid with a long pause. "If it is stable and harmonious, no politicians can ever exist".

Strengthening his case he pointed out political issues and problems were nothing unusual.

"We don't know, we thought it was a Selangor affair, now it's a Kedah affair, next (it may be a) Johor affair... whether it is Pakatan or BN, the environment is the same."

He mused that he saw no "real stability" in the last five years at the helm of Selangor, but quickly added: "If you have the principles and the willpower, you can handle it."

He went on to take a dig at former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, joking that the only credit that could be given to him was that he had managed to get people to agree with him for 22 years.

Khalid added Mahathir's interest was in doing what he wanted. "I don't have that interest."

'No grey hair is my only advantage'

Asked if he would contest in state and parliamentary seats simultaneously again come the next general elections, he refused to give a definite answer, saying that as disciplined party member, it was best he left for the party to answer.

When further pressed, the Ijok state assemblyperson and Bandar Tun Razak MP reiterated his stand.

"I should be most disciplined in this regard, since I'm the menteri besar. If we allow this discipline to be broken, many people will discuss this openly," he said.

Asked if he could handle all his duties well what with wearing so many hats, he replied tongue-in-cheek, "I think the only good thing and advantage (I have) is, I still don't have (much) grey hair!"

Khalid first joined PKR in 2006 and was soon appointed as party treasurer-general and Selangor state chief. He contested in the Ijok by-election in 2007 but lost to MIC candidate K Parthiban.

He made a return in 2008 elections and was made menteri besar after Pakatan took over Selangor.

However, he was replaced as Selangor chief by Azmin, the then vice-president and current deputy

president, in 2010. This was seen as a compromise to end the discord between them.

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