

Has PAS dragged palace into Kedah crisis?

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The establishment of a PAS steering committee to monitor and assist the Kedah government has raised concerns that it may affect the cordial relationship between the party and the palace.

In an analysis published today, Sinar Harian questioned whether PAS had obtained the consent of Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah - also the Agong - before setting up the committee.

"Without this, the action may be seen as presumptuous and direct interference in the state administration. It is not nice (tidak manis) when decisions as important as this are announced without the sultan's consent," says the article.

It points out that the steering committee has clipped the powers of Menteri Besar Azizan Abdul Razak (left) who had received royal consent to govern the state.

"This is a very awkward action which could affect the cordial relationship between the palace and (PAS)," the article claims.

Party secretary-general Mustafa Ali had yesterday denied that the steering committee was set up to usurp Azizan's powers.

The steering committee will merely play an advisory role on issues which may require feedback from the party's top leadership, he clarified.

Statement misinterpreted?

In a related development, two Kedah exco members - Abd Ghani Ahmad and Amiruddin Hamzah - have denied an allegation that the leadership crisis in Kedah was caused by Azizan's alleged insistence on awarding a RM600 million mega-project to an Umno-linked company.

They reportedly said the state exco had decided to award the contract through an open tender.

Their denial follows a claim by Phahrolrazi Mohd Nawawi (right) that he had refused reappointment to the exco, because Azizan had pressured him into endorsing the project.

"Yes. It was something to that effect," was Phahrolrazi's reply when asked by Malaysiakini to confirm or deny the speculation.

However, Sinar Harian today reported that he has refused to confirm this.

"It is an old story. Maybe my statement was misinterpreted by certain people," he was quoted as saying.

Amiruddin also told Sinar Harian that the contract value is not RM600 million but only RM60 million a year.

"The state income makes it impossible for us to offer such a high tender. It is impossible to reach RM600 million," he said.

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