

## **'Kelantan PKR candidates jostling for seats'**

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**By Salhan K Ahmad**

Who will contest on the PKR ticket in Kelantan? This will be an issue PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim is expected to resolve during this visit to the northern state today.

This issue is likely to be high on the agenda due to an ongoing tussle among leaders in the party in the state in line be picked to contest in the coming general election

When contacted, Kelantan PKR vice-chairperson 1 Mohd Makhatar Che Harun confirmed that there is keen competition for nomination on the PKR ticket.

"We had a hard time looking for people to stand in elections before, but now people are jostling (to be nominated)," Makhatar said.

He said the tussle also involved seat negotiations between Kelantan PKR and PAS, which could also see a swap of certain seats between the two Pakatan Rakyat parties

The swap is likely to involve the Machang parliamentary seat, which in 2008 was won by PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution.

It is believed that Saifuddin will not defend the seat to contest in his home state of Kedah instead.

Kelantan PKR had reportedly proposed to swap the Machang seat with the Bachok seat held by PAS, which in 2008 was won by its former deputy president Nasharuddin Mat Isa.

Newspaper Sinar Harian on Aug 23 reported Kelantan PKR chairperson Abdul Aziz Kadir as confirming that the swap proposal was made to Kelantan PAS recently, just before the month of Ramadan ended.

Commenting on this, Makhatar said PKR would abide by any decision made by PAS, which was the dominant party in Kelantan.

"We are just ardent PAS supporters in Kelantan," he said.

Besides Bachok, he said, PKR also hopes to contest the Tanah Merah parliamentary seat and three state constituencies - Nenggiri and Paloh in Gua Musang and Guchil in Kuala Krai.

Makhatar said Anwar was also expected to meet with state PKR leaders in Machang as well as the Kelantan PAS leadership in Kota Baru.

'Bus not at Selangor state expense'

Kelantan is Anwar's second stop in his special campaign bus, sponsored by Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim.

Khalid said in a statement yesterday that the bus, which is adorned with Anwar's image, has been rented for six months and is personally paid for by him.

"All costs, including that for a driver and technical assistance, are included, and not a single state civil servant is involved in this.

"Therefore, I advise those irresponsible quarters to stop slandering by alleging that the bus was hired using Selangor ratepayers' money, " Khalid said.

The second leg of the bus tour will kick off on Sunday, with Anwar expected to visit Pahang, Kedah, Perak and Perlis.

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