

## **S'gor MB says separate polls a matter of strategy**

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**By Hazlan Zakaria**

As a matter of strategy, the Selangor government agreed with the Pakatan Rakyat decision to hold the state election separate from the general election, though this is subject to situational developments.

"As a strategy, yes, we agreed. But it depends on when the federal government declares the election," Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim told reporters at the state secretariat building in Shah Alam today.

The timing, Khalid said, would determine whether it could be beneficial and if indeed it would be practical for the state election to be held separately from the 13th general election.

"Sometimes it can be beneficial... there are times when it may not be."

However, this situation would not arise if the BN-led government calls for the election when its mandate expires next year, as by then even the state's electoral mandate would end and all parties would have to go to the polls.

Asked why this seemed to differ from the statement of Pakatan Rakyat, which said states under its rule will hold their elections separately from the national election, Khalid reiterated that it was accepted strategy, subject to how the situation developed.

Free water: Residents have right to sue

Asked about a group of flats residents who planned to sue him, the state and state water concessionaire Syabas for not being given water for free, as promised by his government, Khalid said it was their right to do so.

Since this had become a court case, he said, he could not deal with the complainants directly, or else he would be seen as interfering in a legal matter. However, he would explain the matter to them in court.

Khalid said Selangor's free water scheme was very clear in that it was intended only for residents with individual water meters, since this would make it easy to identify them in the Syabas database.

All houses built after 2006 have been mandated to have individual meters and only a handful of old housing units still used bulk or collective water meters.

He explained that many such residents have applied to change their water meters to individual units and were enjoying free water.

Khalid said that those with bulk meters should apply to change to individual unit meters, like the others have done.

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