

Appreciation night turns into pro-Khalid Ibrahim rally

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By Koh Jun Lin

A Pakatan Rakyat rally last night meant to show appreciation for retaining Selangor turned into a pro-Khalid Ibrahim rally instead, backing him for a second term in office as menteri besar.

While some speakers, such as Selangor PAS chief Dr Abdul Rani Osman and senator Syed Shahir Syed Mohamud of PKR urged the crowd to leave the decision-making to Pakatan Rakyat, others stated their stance more clearly.

NONE Selangor PAS deputy chief Khalid Samad (left) reiterated to the crowd of over 5,000 that although PAS has more state assembly seats than its allies DAP and PKR, it does not covet the state government's highest office.

Khalid said the party viewed the MB's job as a position of trust and responsibility, not a prize to be seized.

"Asked by reporters, I answered that it would be strange if a football team wins the European League only to have its manager suddenly replaced. That is a very weird and inappropriate move," he said during the rally at Dataran Kemerdekaan, Shah Alam.

Ending the football analogy, Khalid continued, "Pakatan Rakyat Selangor has achieved an excellent success. Umno and BN do not know how to handle us."

To loud cheers from the crowd, he added that he had received a letter from PAS president Hadi Awang two days ago (May 7) backing Khalid Ibrahim for the menteri besar's post.

NONE "If any PAS member does not believe it, come to my office and I will show it. If necessary, I'll stick it to his forehead. God willing, that won't be necessary," Khalid said.

Speaking to reporters later, Khalid said the letter from Hadi was in fact addressed to the Sultan of Selangor and Abdul Rani has been tasked with delivering it.

Another speaker, Selangor DAP chairperson Teresa Kok (right), said the party has already sent a letter to the sultan, also backing Khalid as menteri besar. She told reporters later that the letter was from party secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and

had been sent on May 8.

Throughout the two hours of political speeches, the crowd also spontaneously erupted into shouts of "Retain Tan Sri Khalid!" several times.

'Does not know how to attack opponents'

When it was finally his turn to speak, Khalid Ibrahim said his priority was to return the state's wealth to the people, and said he would keep his speech short because he only knew how to work but not how to attack opponents.

NONEKhalid also pledged to provide updates on the state government's achievements every two months if reappointed, so that the people of Selangor would know what it has done.

Earlier yesterday, Selangor PKR chief Azmin Ali (right) reportedly said - without naming any person - that he does not want a "lame duck" menteri besar who could be influenced by others.

English daily The Star's online edition quoted Azmin as saying that since Selangor has been given a strong mandate with 40 seats in the state assembly, it should be led by a decisive leader with a clear vision.

Speculation has been running rife for some time that he is vying to become the menteri besar himself, despite him pledging loyalty to Khalid during a state assembly sitting last year.

NONEAsked to comment on Azmin's statement, Khalid (left) told reporters, "All these matters have been taken into consideration and there is no need to air this publicly.

"The decision-making will be a joint decision among the three parties (within Pakatan Rakyat)."

The event started last night with prayers and a free dinner at about 7.15pm, while political speeches began at about 9.30pm and lasted until 11.40pm.

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