

PKR and PAS lock horns over Selangor MB
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PKR has shot back at PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's unilateral backing of Abdul Khalid Ibrahim to stay on as Selangor menteri besar.

In a statement today, PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (below) maintained that his party's nomination of its president Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to replace Abdul Khalid had already been accepted during the Pakatan Rakyat presidential council meeting.

He added that the July 23 meeting where the decision was taken included six PAS leaders, namely deputy president Mohamad Sabu, vice presidents Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man and Husam Musa, secretary-general Mustapha Ali, Youth chief Suhaizan Kayat and central committee member Hatta Ramli.

"This process is the highest decision making mechanism in Pakatan Rakyat that has been respected ever since Pakatan Rakyat was founded.

"Every party is represented by the top leadership who are given the mandate to convey the decision of their respective parties in Pakatan Rakyat," he said.

He added at the meeting, PAS and DAP reaffirmed respect for the principle that the nomination of the Selangor menteri besar is PKR's prerogative.

Saifuddin drew parallel of the current situation with that of PAS ruled Kedah prior to the 13th general election.

"PKR took the stance of respecting the principle that the nomination for the Kedah menteri besar lies with PAS, even though there were various requests from the Pakatan Rakyat leadership for PKR to declare whether it wanted the menteri besar to be changed or not," he said.

'PKR respected PAS Kedah too'

In 2012, two exco members from PAS resigned from the Kedah government, disgruntled with the late menteri besar Azizan Abdul Razak.

The crisis escalated with demands for Azizan to step down, but it was eventually diffused after the PAS central leadership stepped in and set up an oversight committee for the state.

Saifuddin said Pakatan will stand by the July 23 decision and hoped the component parties will respect the principle of nomination for menteri besar in the respective states.

He added that PAS should take into account the commitment it had already made at the meeting when the PAS central committee convenes its on August 10.

There was some confusion over whether PAS had agreed to Khalid's replacement at the Pakatan Rakyat presidential council meeting.

This came about after the Islamist party issued a contradictory statement on Facebook hours after Pakatan Rakyat's joint-statement announcing that the coalition had accepted (menerima) PKR's nomination of Wan Azizah as Abdul Khalid's replacement.

The argument revolved around the semantics of the word "menerima" which could mean "received" or "accepted".

"Receiving (menerima) does not mean agreeing but (it meant) the proposal is received for further discussion by the respective parties," argued the PAS statement.

'Senseless play of words'

When contacted for clarification, Saifuddin insisted that the word "menerima" in the correct context of the meeting was to mean "accepted", and not merely "received".

"It is a play on words (to say) we received the proposal and will bring back to the leadership council to decide later. It is playing with the sentence," he told Malaysiakini today.

Saifuddin said the July 23 meeting was specifically called to address the replacement of Khalid and to now suggest otherwise was nonsensical.

"The replacement of the menteri besar was the main topic. It was the only agenda at the meeting.

"It doesn't make sense for Pakatan to come out with the statement (announcing the replacement) which I quoted if there was no issue of replacing the menteri besar.

"We have to read that in context with the very crystal clear intention that the issue is the replacement of the menteri besar," he said.

Yesterday, Hadi said he supported Abdul Khalid's continued tenure as the former did not betray the trust of the people and hoped other PAS leaders will share the same stance.

Meanwhile, PAS Ulama acting chief Ahmad Yakob in a statement today backed Hadi's position and pledged the wing's support for Khalid.

Ahmad Yakob, who is also Kelantan menteri besar, said there was no basis in Syariah law to remove Abdul Khalid.

"Any effort to replace the Selangor menteri besar without the agreement of all three component parties namely PAS, PKR and DAP which could cause confusion among the rakyat should be avoided," he said.

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