

**Anwar: This is not 1998, Khalid's not my enemy**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Aug 8, 2014**

The Selangor menteri mesr will not be unfairly sacked by PKR and turned into a bitter enemy, like what happened between Dr Mahathir Mohamad and himself in 1998, Anwar Ibrahim said today.

Stressing that Khalid has been clued in on the plan to replace him since Jan 15, the PKR de facto leader said the final decision would be made through a Pakatan consensus, even as Khalid dug in and refused to budge from office.

"I don't think it is correct to equate that sort of the rancorous exchange in '98 and the situation now and the issues raised. I came out to fight Umno, not to strengthen Umno.

"At the right time, if compelled to, I will explain. What the public needs to know is that we have observed this process of umpteen meetings of counselling and advice (with Khalid)," he told reporters at the PKR headquarters.

Anwar (right) called Khalid a friend and even a family member, and reminded that Khalid also headed the Kajang by-election campaign, which helped make it possible for Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to replace him.

Anwar said since January, PKR president Wan Azizah, PAS president Hadi Awang and DAP's parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang have had a series of meetings on the so-called 'Kajang Move' to replace Khalid.

'No need to hype the crisis'

At least one of the meetings even roped in Khalid and was held in Shah Alam, Anwar said. Therefore, there was no need to hype the crisis into a bitter, long-drawn-out fight among bitter enemies.

"Because of that I avoided answering some of the allegations made by the younger politicians (budak-budak bawah). They sometimes go overboard a little and my advice to them is keep check and focus on the facts and the common party fight. There is no need to turn offensive," Anwar said.

During the press conference, Anwar also mostly gave the same answer to different questions about divergent views from PKR's partners in Pakatan.

Yesterday, the powerful PAS syura council has declared its support for Khalid, while DAP veteran leader Lim Kit Siang expressed worry that Pakatan's demise was merely days

away.

"You are asking us to fight? What for?" Anwar asked reporters in jest.

He said that all views expressed by Pakatan coalition members will be listened to and taken into account before a final decision is made.

"We take into account (these views) and we respect them but we have to make a decision - who is finally chosen as the MB of Selangor is under PKR's purview," he said.

When pressed by reporters for a solution to the quandary, Anwar would only urge people to wait and see.

He said that a clearer picture would probably emerge after the disciplinary board meeting today and a PKR central leadership committee meeting tomorrow. And he himself is waiting for the Aug 17 meeting to see what PAS finally decides.

Anwar also shrugged off a petition campaign by Selangor state assemblypersons to pressure Khalid to quit, saying the immediate focus now was on the PKR party leaders meeting tomorrow.

Anwar, who was once the prime minister-in-waiting, was sacked from government and from Umno in 1998 by Mahathir when he refused to resign. This sparked off the reformasi movement and marked the beginnings of PKR.

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