

PKR crisis spillover places stress on PAS groups

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As the conflict within PKR over its move to replace Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim deepens, PAS is feeling the spillover effects as ties between two groups within the party come under heavy strain.

It has turned so bad that some party members have become emotional to the extent of hurling abuse at each other while others have proposed that PAS ditch Pakatan Rakyat.

PAS party organ Harakah editor-in-chief Ahmad Lufti Othman (right) summed up the Islamic party's debate on the crisis as being between the "bad" and the "ugly" even though it originated from the PKR.

"Why has it become so easy for us to state views and make remarks that at times are so bad and ugly, simply for the sake of defending our arguments?"

"Whereas my observation is, some of them are shielding themselves behind their Islamic group image," he said in a Facebook posting last night.

Ahmad Lufti advised his party colleagues to be more polite and mindful of their comrades' sensitivities, including those within Pakatan.

He also reminded all quarters not to indulge in a stripping contest until everyone is naked in the public's view.

Bitter taste of quarrels

Sources tell Malaysiakini that a proposal to exit Pakatan has come from the Islamic party's progressive group, often described as the Erdogans usually supportive of the opposition coalition and PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim.

Malaysiakini understands that the proposal was born out of several leaders' disappointment over the protracted war of words and apparent lack of respect among PAS comrades sparked by PKR's move to replace Abdul Khalid.

"It's better to lose (without Pakatan) but be able to appreciate the sweetness of our struggle than to win while we quarrel among each other.

"The menteri besar crisis has deepened the split between the pro-Ulama and Erdogans.

"They are all showing their true faces," said a PAS source, referring to the Islamic party's

long standing friction between conservatives and progressives.

Rumour is rife that the Dewan Harian, PAS' top management body, will put forward the proposal to exit Pakatan at its central committee meeting on Aug 17 as the party has hit a dead end, resulting from Anwar's Kajang Move strategy.

However, the move is not over yet as the situation continues to be fluid with new developments, including PKR's meeting today and DAP's tomorrow over the crisis as PAS nears its own D-Day.

The Kajang Move, which was marketed by PKR as such, saw the party triggering a by-election in Kajang in March to pave the way for Anwar's candidacy but that was frustrated when he was speedily convicted of sodomy for the second time.

Anwar (above) remains free pending appeal at the Federal Court but was disqualified, prompting his wife Wan Azizah Wan Ismail who is PKR president, to go for the seat and winning.

Time will tell

The aim was to install the new Kajang state assemblyperson as the new menteri besar which was officially announced on July 23 but Abdul Khalid dug in, defying PKR.

PAS was drawn into the quagmire after its deputy president Mohamad Sabu and several Erdogans endorsed PKR's move but the Islamic party's president Abdul Hadi Awang, with pro-Ulama group support, backed Abdul Khalid.

While the battle lines have been drawn for some, other PAS central committee members have adopted a "wait and see" approach to the developments ahead of the highly anticipated central committee meeting.

The meeting, which was initially slated for tomorrow, was postponed to Aug 13 and subsequently Aug 17 to avoid a showdown before the facts of the situation become clear.

Despite the looming showdown, PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub appeared optimistic.

"For me, whatever crisis involving PKR over the menteri besar issue, I am confident there is a formula which we can use," he told Malaysiakini.

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