

## **Mat Sabu: How can PAS back ex-PKR Khalid?**

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Moderate PAS leaders have expressed their wish to see the party stick to Pakatan Rakyat, even as their top leadership refused to state their stand over the deepening Selangor menteri besar crisis.

PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu went as far as saying, "How can we support Khalid when he is no longer in PKR?"

"He is an Independent menteri besar now. There is no more issue for us to support Khalid," he added when met in Penang today.

The Selangor crisis heightened yesterday with Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim (left) sacking six state executive councillors from DAP and PKR.

This follows his own sacking from PKR on Saturday for clinging on to the menteri besar post although the party has announced its president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to replace Khalid.

All eyes are on PAS now as it is yet to state its stand on the issue, although the party's president Abdul Hadi Awang has previously expressed his support for Khalid.

DAP has warned of a split in Pakatan if PAS continues to support Khalid, and is pressuring the party to state if it is with Pakatan or Umno, as the latter has thrown its backing behind the menteri besar.

To this, Mohamad, better known as Mat Sabu (right), said, "Definitely we are with Pakatan."

"It is compulsory for us to be with Pakatan. We cannot run away from this.

"We stand to lose if we split from Pakatan," he added, referring to the cooperation harnessed with its allies DAP and PKR especially during elections since 2008.

"There are certain personal opinions which may say otherwise but that remains their personal opinion, the leadership is committed to Pakatan," he stressed.

"We cannot quit Pakatan unless the decision is made by our muktamar," he further said, referring to the party's annual assembly.

He declined to comment further except to say that the party's political bureau will meet tomorrow night, and central committee leaders will meet on Sunday, before PAS declares

its stand on the Selangor crisis.

'Umno would certainly exploit the situation'

On Umno's support for Khalid, Mat Sabu said that the party is a political entity.

"Umno would definitely exploit the situation for its own benefit. Whether they are sincere in their support or not, remains to be seen," he added.

Yesterday, another moderate leader, PAS central committee member Mujahid Yusof Rawa (left), said despite the weaknesses in Pakatan's organisation and structure, the coalition, formed since 2008, should not split just because of Khalid.

"The spirit and idealism of Pakatan is too good to abandon just because of one person," Mujahid had told Malaysiakini.

He also viewed the removal of a menteri besar as a "natural and unsurprising" move, adding that PKR do not even need a reason to tell Khalid to step down, as it is within the party's power to do so.

Hulu Kelang assemblyperson Saari Sungib also said the stand he is taking is to "side with Pakatan Rakyat".

"Two (out of three) Pakatan parties have taken a stand to reject Khalid. I feel that this is a reasonable stand to take and PAS should take the same stand," Saari had told Malaysiakini last night.

He urged PAS leaders to swiftly make a decision on the matter and not wait until the central committee meeting on Aug 17.

Meanwhile, Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad (right) said PAS will be in a difficult situation if an election is called in Selangor to resolve the controversy over the menteri besar's position.

He added that the party would be in a difficult position as the party is seen to be siding with Khalid and Umno in this issue.

Selangor crisis today

10am: PAS exco members say they will resign if Umno assemblypersons are appointed onto the exco.

10.19am: Sacked exco members from PKR and DAP arrive at work as usual.

10.37am: Law expert Abdul Aziz Bari contradicts another expert Gurdial Singh Nijar, by saying that the sacking of 5 exco members is lawful.

10.48am: PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu urges party to side with Pakatan against MB Khalid.

12.27pm: PAS calls on PKR to name a new MB candidate, after the palace rejects Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail's request for an audience.

12.46pm: Sacked exco members are told to vacate their offices

1.48pm: MB Khalid says exco member from PKR, Rodziah Ismail, who is overseas, is not sacked as she may still support MB Khalid.

3.33pm: MB Khalid says he is not appointing new exco members from Umno, for now.

4pm: PAS MP Khalid Samad says while waiting for PAS' decision, the MB has 'enough rope to hang himself'.

5pm: MB issues legal letter to PKR secretary-general demanding apology for the 'corruption dossier'.

11.36pm: Rodziah says she does not support Khalid and will resign from the exco.

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