

## **PAS leader explains Hadi's bid to poach Azmin**

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INTERVIEW PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang offered PKR deputy president Azmin Ali to join the Islamic party because he feared the wrath of the Malays if PKR formed the Selangor government without PAS.

This is according to PAS central committee member Khalid Samad in an exclusive interview with Malaysiakini, who attempted to provide the context which Abdul Hadi offered Azmin to defect to PAS.

Khalid, who is one of PAS leaders who did not agree to Hadi's initial support for outgoing Selangor MB Khalid Ibrahim, took pains to explain Hadi's actions.

He was commenting on the Selangor menteri besar crisis in which PKR made a move to replace Khalid Ibrahim as MB with its president Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, only to find Hadi and the ulama faction digging in their heels.

Last month, two PAS state assemblypersons - Saari Sungip and Hasnul Bahauddin - went against their party's orders and inked their support for Wan Azizah, giving her a majority in the state assembly with 30 seats in the 56-seat House.

It was then said Azmin had met Hadi and the latter had offered the former to join PAS. The offer to Azmin was condemned as unethical by some Pakatan leaders.

Hadi and the ulama faction are known, till today not to be in favour of Wan Azizah to be MB but they reportedly bowed to PAS central committee, where at its Aug 17 meeting named the PKR president along with Azmin as one of the possible MB candidates.

'They steal our people'

"What we have to understand is that Hadi felt that Wan Azizah has already gotten the 30 SDs (statutory declarations) and could form the government without PAS," said Khalid.

"He felt that if the two (Saari and Hasnul) can betray PAS and support Wan Azizah - if PKR can 'steal' two PAS state assemblypersons - then he feared a bigger betrayal would take place whereby PAS is sidelined or kicked out of Pakatan.

"If that (betrayal) happens, then that government will be a Malay minority one and in such a situation, the Malays would be angry with PAS.

"In this context that PAS may be betrayed by PKR, Hadi thought out a plan to save the situation so that the Malays would not be angry with PAS because the formation of a state

government with a DAP majority, where the issue of race would be played up and PAS would be blamed.

"So, Hadi thought of a reaction whereby if we were to be betrayed and they 'steal' our people, we 'steal back' their people.

"It was (done) in that context - it was not planned or premeditated. This was a reaction to the question 'if we were to be betrayed, what is our reaction?'" said Khalid.

However, Khalid said even though Saari and Hasnul was perceived as having gone against the party, the duo should be given a fair hearing. PAS is taking disciplinary action against the two.

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