

Azmin, Nik Nazmi deny being present at palace
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PKR deputy president Azmin Ali and party Youth chief Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad have denied being present at the Selangor palace this morning to rehearse for tomorrow's menteri besar swearing-in ceremony.

Responding to Malaysiakini regarding a photograph published in a news portal purportedly showing him at the palace, Azmin dismissed it.

"Not true," he remarked in a text message.

When met at the PKR headquarters, he reiterated that he "did not attend the rehearsals and "was not invited".

"I'm not giving a press conference. Thank you, there is 24 hours to go," Azmin told waiting reporter, without elaborating.

Similarly, Nik Nazmi (right), who is also Selangor state assembly deputy speaker, issued a denial via a Twitter posting, which stated, "This is an inaccurate report. I was never at the palace."

According to the news portal's report, the disputed photograph had been making the rounds among Selangor Pakatan Rakyat assemblypersons via a WhatsApp group chat.

A DAP lawmaker was quoted as saying that Azmin, who is also in the chat group, was tightlipped when several reps congratulated him.

However, Malaysiakini learnt that Azmin would attend the rehearsal to be held tomorrow, prior to the swearing-in ceremony scheduled at 10am at Istana Alam Shah in Klang.

What remains to be seen is if PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim would give his blessings for Azmin to helm the state or if this would mark the end of a long relationship that has survived numerous tumultuous episodes.

Met later at the PKR headquarters in Petaling Jaya, Azmin reiterated that he did not go to the palace.

"I was not there, I was no present, I was not invited," he said.

Quizzed on the meeting which took place at the party headquarters, Azmin denied that he met Anwar.

"It was a normal meeting. Some said that I would give a press conference but no. Thank-you, there is still 24 hours (for the installation of the new MB)," he added.

Among those present at the meeting were PKR vice-presidents Tian Chua and Nurul Izzah Anwar, and Nik Nazmi.

Azmin, who is also Bukit Antarabangsa assemblyperson, has been with Anwar since the latter was deputy prime minister, serving as his private secretary prior to his boss' sacking in 1998.

Anwar has insisted that his wife and PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail become the menteri besar.

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