



**Reasons behind Selangor PKR mutiny**  
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**COMMENT** There is not as much doubt as to whether there is a revolt brewing in PKR against Khalid Ibrahim's stewardship as Selangor menteri besar as there is about the reasons for the mutiny.

Given the propensity of conspirators in the drama to 'baling batu, sembunyi tangan' (Malay for 'fanning the flames but concealing the culprit'), and the disclaimers of Khalid's cohort that rebellion is imminent, it is difficult to say for sure that two years of rumblings against the MB have reached ignition point.

But it's not in doubt as to why he is unpopular among PKR state and federal legislators.

The man is not a politician. He is blasé about the reality that politics is also about jobs, rewards and recognition for stalwarts who have struggled for the party in the teeth of repression by the powers-that-be.

Khalid likes to say that when he joined PKR in the middle of the past decade and was made its treasurer and then secretary-general, the party had only one MP and little in the kitty.

On the face of it, that statement is true but if by that he meant that he came into the party when it was bare of representation and financial support, he would slight the early phase of PKR's history which entailed struggles, deprivations and repression endured by its steadfast and early supporters.

To this core of party faithful, Khalid, despite his status as a stellar entry into PKR, is a Johnny-come-lately.

### **Lack of political acumen**

Though their perception of Khalid was out of sync with PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim's parading Khalid as confirmation that Anwar's decision to break away from Umno in protest at its plutocratic emergence was sound, initially the dissonance did not matter.

PKR faithful understood that Anwar would want to seek vindication in Khalid's breaking ranks with an establishment from which he hugely benefited.

However, the lack of synchronicity started to trouble when Khalid, after having lost on a PKR ticket in the Ijok state by-election in April 2007, expressed a preference to stand in Kapar in the March 2008 general election.

Kapar, in PKR's reckoning, was the ideal staging ground for the party's strategy of drawing away Indian support from MIC by fielding an Indian candidate to unseat the MIC incumbent.

In the event, PKR's S Manikavasagam, an ex-MIC Youth leader, was successful in toppling the MIC incumbent in the general election.

Insignificant as that episode was, it depicted Khalid's lack of appreciation of the larger PKR picture.

## **Party faithful strike back**

He compounded matters by talking to PAS' Hasan Ali about the latter being deputy to him as MB on the day after the coalition of PKR, DAP and PAS won a comfortable majority of seats in Selangor in the March 8, 2008 general election.

PKR insiders were appalled because Hasan was reportedly propositioned by Umno's Dr Mohd Khir Toyo about a possible coalition between BN and PAS.

The talks between Khir Toyo and Hasan reputedly broke down over who was to be menteri besar.

These miscues by Khalid, and the misgivings about him that this occasioned among PKR insiders, did not seem to give him pause.

Unperturbed, he proceeded as MB to do a fairly good job as CEO of the country's most economically vibrant state, but still showed little appreciation of what PKR control of this entity implied for the party faithful.

The faithful are now striking back, it seems.

If anything, Khalid's saga suggests that corporate roles are poor preparation for political ones and vice versa, as former Umno stalwart Musa Hitam is perhaps discovering in the Sime Darby imbroglio.

Whether a revolt against Khalid is set to go off or not, the upside to all this is the discovery that the worlds of politics and business are different realms. The twain do not fuse.

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