

Will Zaid make another u-turn?
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NEWS ANALYSIS As nominations for the top PKR leadership posts come to a close, all eyes are now turned on former party secretary-general Khalid Ibrahim and deputy presidency aspirant Zaid Ibrahim.

As one of the earliest members to state his intentions in the party polls, Zaid (*above*) had gone back on his pledge to stay out of the party polls and announced that he would vie for "that position" should Khalid stay out of the fray.

Though he never mentioned it explicitly, it was widely assumed that Zaid was referring to the deputy presidency.

Now that Khalid had received at least four nominations to go for the post, coupled by his successful retention of his position as Kuala Selangor division chief, he is believed to be mulling joining the race.

Khalid has been cool on the subject and while encouraging the Kuala Selangor division not to nominate him for the deputy presidency, said that this did not rule him out from contesting as he already had enough nominations to qualify.

Should Khalid accept nominations for the deputy presidency, this will definitely put the spotlight on Zaid - and whether he would honour his "promise" to make way for Khalid.



Though it still depends on Khalid to officially throw his hat into the contest, which also includes Azmin Ali and Mustaffa Kamil Ayub, several PKR leaders contacted are split over Zaid's potential reaction.

"He did say that he will stay out of Khalid's way, but later justified his bid for the post with a lot of different reasons. So you will have to ask him personally," said PKR supreme council member Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad (*left*), in his personal capacity.

Others believe that Zaid, whose backers pitch him as a "man of principles", will have no choice but to keep his promise, rather than break that image.

Common ground with Khalid

"I think he will keep to his word. He shares a lot of common ground with Khalid," said Shariffuddin Budin, who is a key player in the Selangor Keadilan Leadership Consensus Council, better known by its Malay acronym *Muafakat*.



Most notably, Zaid shares a commonality with Khalid (*left*) in their rivalry with Azmin, who is now Selangor PKR chief and vice-president of the party.

As such, the likely theory is that should Zaid pull out, the bulk of his

votes would be diverted to Khalid and thus mounting a credible challenge against Azmin, who is still the favourite.

It is an open secret that Azmin is at odds with Khalid's leadership of the Selangor government and has openly criticised the menteri besar during state legislative assembly meetings.

Though receiving only a handful of nominations compared with about three dozen received by Zaid, Khalid is seen as a credible challenger to Azmin.

"Many call Zaid a maverick and not much of a team player, while Azmin is branded as being overambitious. Khalid on the other hand has a proven track record as an efficient menteri besar of Selangor.

"Then again, Khalid has often been criticised as being hard-headed and should he win the deputy president's post, he would be even more hard-headed," said one Selangor division leader on condition of anonymity.

Azmin (*right*), Zaid and Khalid are all heavyweights based in Selangor, which holds the bulk of PKR members who will be voting in direct elections starting at the end of this month.

If Khalid gets in the mix and from Selangor intensifying












Mustafa have candidates for beforehand advantage. Khalid is job, but division concrete

Khalid was in Kuala

he retained convincing

disaster for his position as expected to for deputy or



PKR direct party election			As of Oct 3
President			
 Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail 123	 Anwar Ibrahim 15	 Zaid Ibrahim 3	
Deputy president			
 Azmin Ali 102	 Zaid Ibrahim 38	 Mustafa Kamil Ayub 17	
 Tian Chua 5	 Khalid Ibrahim 4	 Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail 3	
 Fuziah Salleh 1	 Nurul Izzah 1		
Source: Unofficial results gathered from party sources		Azlan Zamhari / Malaysiakini	

becomes the "third force", votes are expected to be split, thus the campaign in other states. Khalid's announcement soon However, Azmin, Zaid and all offered themselves as the deputy presidency long and this is likely to give them an

believed to be interested in the waited for the Kuala Selangor elections before making any decision.

It was widely speculated that danger of losing his position in Selangor due to grassroots disgruntlement, but in the end the post last night, with a majority.

A loss would have been a Khalid because it would have put menteri besar in jeopardy. He is announce his candidacy, either vice-presidency, later this week.

The official list of candidates for the central leadership positions will be announced on Sunday.

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