

PKR must explain its choice, says PSM
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Opposition party Parti Sosialis Malaysia's (PSM) recognition of the PKR candidate for the coming Ijok by-election, Khalid Ibrahim, will depend on PKR's response to several 'human rights violation allegations' involving the former plantation top gun.

"We have raised this issue with the PKR leadership who have given us an assurance that they will bring up this issue and take appropriate action," said PSM pro-tem Secretary-General S Arutchelvan in the statement today.

The statement follows a meeting between PSM's national leadership and PSM's Subang branch which had expressed displeasure over Khalid's (photo) candidacy and alleged that he was directly involved in the eviction of plantation workers particularly at Bukit Jelutong near Ijok.

The Subang branch had previously said that it had 'problems' campaigning for Khalid and had also toyed with the idea of fielding its own candidate for the Ijok by-election to 'make a principled stand'.

No racial politics

Arutchelvan, however, confirmed that PSM would not be fielding any candidate for Ijok, nor would be supporting any independent candidate.

"Would like to state that we reject Barisan Nasional. A victory to the opposition at this juncture would be a good outcome as a sign of protest to the rule of BN.

"We have also therefore decided not to field any candidate in the by-election as well as not put our support behind any independent candidates," he said.

Arutchelvan also said that PSM was against racial politics of any form.

"Any candidate chosen to represent any party should be able to represent the interests of the people rather than be representative to any particular race or religion."

Contacted later, Arutchelvan told malaysiakini that the party may re-evaluate its stand regarding Khalid's candidacy for the by-election if they receive a response from PKR on the matter raised.

The yet-to-be formally registered PSM commands a following among estate workers and urban settlers in Peninsular Malaysia, including at Ijok.

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