

Khalid sworn in as Selangor MB
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Fauwaz Abdul Aziz

PKR secretary-general and Ijok state representative Abdul Khalid Ibrahim today received the appointment letter and was sworn in as the 14th Selangor menteri besar before Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah. MCPX

The 20-minute ceremony took place at Istana Bukit Kayangan in Shah Alam at 3.30pm.

After taking the oath of office, Khalid signed the appointment letter witnessed by Shah Alam High Court Judge Syed Ahmad Helmy Syed Ahmad.

Among those present at the ceremony were Selangor state secretary Ramli Mahmud, PAS state commissioner and Gombak Setia state representative Hassan Mohd Ali, and DAP publicity secretary and Kinrara state assemblyperson Teresa Kok.

At the press conference that followed, Khalid said he has not been given a "deadline" to submit to the sultan the name for a deputy menteri besar.

khalid ibrahim selangor mb cm swearing in ceremony 130308 05The more urgent matter at the moment is that of the state executive council (exco) members, who have to be sworn in on or before March 22 and who will spearhead the state development programmes, he said.

"I have not given any advice (to the sultan on the matter). I will (seek as soon as possible to) reveal only the exco positions first, so that it gives us enough time to work out what are our plans for the future of Selangor," he said.

"(The issue of excos) is of a higher priority than the position (of deputy menteri besar)," he added.

Earlier in the press conference, the Selangor sultan's private secretary Muhd Munir Bani had said reports that the palace was in favour of appointing a deputy menteri besar from one particular race was not true.

As the sultan's responsibilities include being head of Islamic affairs and matters pertaining to Malay customs, however, the appointed deputy menteri besar "should be a Malay Muslim in order to facilitate the above tasks," said Munir.

Capability of exco members

Commenting on this, Khalid said it would take time to resolve the issue.

"You must appreciate that we are in a monarchy system in that (many) states have their own conventions that need to be considered very carefully," he said.

DAP leader Kok, among other leading figures in Selangor, had been widely rumoured to be in the running for the post of deputy menteri besar.

Admitting that he had been pressured by various quarters lobbying one or other candidate

for the post, Khalid said it was normal occurrence.

"From business... and organisational point of view, we have to work together to assign people on the basis of their capability and also the type of assignment we want to give them," he said.

On the sultan's advice to him as incoming MB, Khalid said he was counselled to ensure that there are no drastic changes of senior civil servant or other employees so as to ensure the state government machinery operates as smoothly as possible.

Among the first steps to ensure that state government's operational costs do not needlessly increase, Khalid also said he will recommend that government offices not be refurbished or renovated to any great degree or other such expenditures for at least one year.

"The people want to see us managing Selangor in the most effective and transparent manner. I owe it to the voters, so as the first step, we will limit the luxuries but sustain the activities of the state," he said.

Among the state government's present challenges is fulfilling the coalition's election promises while facing such economic issues as inflation, the slowing down of global economies, and ensuring that Selangor continues to grow, said Khalid.

Commenting on the New Economic Policy (NEP) that the DAP-led Penang government, on the one hand, vowed to dismantle while the PAS-led states of Kedah and Kelantan, on the other hand, said they would 'reform' the NEP, Khalid said it was "not an issue" for the Selangor.

"(The question is) have we done enough to everyone of those in need, whether they are Malays, Chinese, Indians or others? We must respect the constitution which gives rights to Malays, but not to the extent of jeopardising the cohesiveness of the community," he said.

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