

Friday : decision on Selangor water deal
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Selangor Mentri Besar Khalid Ibrahim said he will announce Friday the decision on a water supply agreement controversially entered by the previous state government with two companies on the eve of polling day. MCPX

khalid ibrahim selangor mb pc 260308 02At a press conference after chairing the new state government's first executive council meeting today, Khalid promised to give the people the 'best deal'.

However, he declined to comment on the ongoing negotiations.

"We'll give you the best deal. We are talking about a win-win situation (between) the state, federal government and consumers. Last time, the calculation did not include the consumers.

"So support us, then we'll deliver it to you. We will make an announcement in two days," he said with a smile.

The PKR leader also dismissed claims by Energy, Water and Telecommunications Minister Shaziman Abu Mansor who yesterday declared that the agreement was valid.

Commenting on this, Khalid said: "(The agreement) can stand but I think the consumers would want assurance from Shaziman that it was a fair deal to the people of Selangor."

"If it is not a fair deal to them, we will ask them to write letters to Shaziman that he has not acted in the interest of the people.

"Both the federal and the state governments can review the agreement. Selangor is also a party to the contract," he said.

Still relevant

shaziman abu mansorShaziman reportedly said that the concession agreement between the Selangor state government and Puncak Niaga Holdings Bhd that was signed on the eve of the general election is still relevant.

He opined that the agreement for the operation and maintenance of the Sungai Sireh water treatment plant was a valid agreement unless the National Water Services Commission (Span) declares it null and void.

Khalid, in his first task as MB, decided to review this agreement which appeared lopsided in favour of certain quarters with an interest in the concession agreement.

On top of this, the agreement - entered by Puncak Niaga Holdings Bhd (PNHB), Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Syabas) and the Selangor state government - was signed at a questionable period of time.

According to media reports, the agreement dated Dec 15, 2004 was to take effect on April 1, 2007 and due to expire on April 30, 2034.

However an agreement between the three parties and the federal government was signed on March 7, 2008 - a day before the general election.

Secretary to the state government Ramli Mahmud told reporters two weeks ago that this was nothing out of the ordinary as "some negotiations take a long time" to conclude.

khir toyo 181207The other questionable aspect of this agreement was that Ramli instead of former MB Dr Mohd Khir Toyo who inked it.

Mohd Khir was earlier quoted in media reports as having no knowledge of the deal.

Hillside development

In another development, Khalid said that exco member Ronnie Liu who is in charge of local government, research and development will be tasked to resolve hillside development-related problems.

"He will be meeting local government representatives in Ampang and other areas with hillside developments to advice the exco on what further action can be taken by us," he said.

Khalid also said land grants will no longer be given to individuals but to institutions with close relations to the state government.

He noted that schools and religious buildings will be charged a nominal rent of RM1 per year as a sign of support in their activities.

He added that state exco members plan to appear in the local state radio station to interact with listeners and get feedback from the people.

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