

# Khair: State reps can be councillors

KUALA LANGAT: Despite the problems created by an assemblyman, Selangor insists on maintaining its practice of allowing assemblymen to sit as councillors in local authorities.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo justified it by saying that assemblymen needed to bring people's problems directly to the council presidents and this was the best way.

"There are many complaints related to potholes, clogged drains and streetlights that are not functioning."

He said these problems were often brought to the attention of assemblymen and if they did not have avenues to deal directly with the councils, it would create a new problem.

"Even now, with them sitting in the councils, their complaints are sometimes ignored. What would happen if they were outside?"

He was speaking to the Press during a visit to the Hari Raya open house of state executive councillor Datuk Abdul Fatah Iskandar in Sijanggang here yesterday.

Dr Khair said Selangor should not be com-

pared to other states.

"We are not asking for bridges or roads anymore. Everything is already there. I don't want assemblymen to be relegated to signing letters of support only."

He hoped the Federal government would take into account Selangor's unique position when making any decision regarding the appointment of councillors.

He added that just because of one case, assemblymen should not be prevented from sitting as councillors.

Datuk Zakaria Mat Deros was to have been appointed councillor for another term.

But when allegations that he had flouted council laws by not submitting building plans for his house surfaced, he was criticised by everyone, including the Sultan of Selangor and the Menteri Besar. He was given a deadline to "resign" as councillor.

Dr Khair said the state shared the view of the Selangor Backbenches Club which passed a resolution supporting the appointment of assemblymen as councillors.