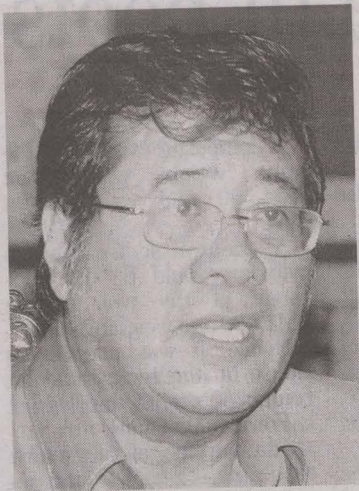


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Khalid's aide suspended for 'misconduct'

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Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim says the suspension of his special officer is to facilitate investigations

■ By Neville Spykerman
neville@nst.com.my

SHAH ALAM: A top aide to Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim was suspended for two months, effective yesterday.

According to sources, Yahya Sahri, a special officer to the menteri besar and a Parti Keadilan Rakyat member who was previously cleared by the Anti-Corruption Agency for abuse of power in another matter, has been implicated in allegedly soliciting funds from private companies for Pakatan Rakyat's 100th day-in-office celebrations, which was held on Friday.

However, the suspension, with pay, is only to facilitate investigations into both cases.

Meanwhile, Abdul Khalid said yesterday that although the official was cleared of corruption by the ACA on

the earlier case, his conduct was deemed as improper.

"He was cleared of any criminal wrongdoing but the ACA had advised me that his (official) actions were inappropriate."

It was earlier reported that the official had written supporting letters, for cleaning and garbage collection to be awarded to several companies.

Abdul Khalid said these supporting letters could only be issued to municipalities and not to companies, as in the case, as it raised the issue of conflict of interest.

The move to suspend the official was taken to allow the state to scrutinise all his files, during his tenure, in the past two months.

Abdul Khalid said any wrongdoing on the part of the official would be forwarded to the special select committee for competency, accountability and transparency, which was headed

by Speaker Teng Chang Khim.

Abdul Khalid, who was speaking after the opening of the Selangor People's Economy (MES) service centre at the state secretariat, denied that the move to collect funds from companies had soured relations between PKR and Pas.

On Saturday, former PKR Youth chief Mohamad Ezam Mohd Nor claimed that Pas was unhappy that money collected from companies for the celebrations were channelled into PKR's accounts.

Abdul Khalid admitted that the donations were unnecessary and it would have been better if the money collected had been deposited into the state's accounts.

He said surplus funds had been frozen and a committee, comprising members from Pakatan Rakyat component parties, would decide where to channel the money.

He also said there were no "cracks" in the relationship between PKR and Pas as claimed by Ezam.

Earlier, Abdul Khalid said Friday's celebrations marked the end of the honeymoon period for Pakatan Rakyat in Selangor.

"Now we have to get down to implementing measures and strategies announced earlier."

The MES service centre is a one-stop centre for the public to obtain information and take advantage of various funds and benefits available.

He also said a RM300 allowance would be provided to state government employees who wanted to learn an additional language.

"We live in a multiracial country and we want to encourage our staff to be bilingual or even trilingual."

The allowance will be extended to staff who want to learn to speak Tamil, Mandarin and Arabic.