

**Utusan tells Umno to exploit Kedah PAS troubles**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**September 03, 2011**  
**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 3 — Utusan Malaysia told Umno today to exploit the alleged turmoil in Kedah PAS, saying that recent rumours of a ploy to unseat Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak should be used to expose the Islamist party's weak state administration.

The paper's editor Zulkiflee Bakar alleged in his column today that Umno's state chapter has always been slow in exploiting such opportunities to its benefit and warned that this would eventually hamper development in Kedah.

"We do not want Kedah Umno to interfere in PAS's internal strife; it is sufficient to make the people aware that PAS is not as good as they portray themselves to be, even though they often claim to be superior to Umno.

PAS have said that Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak will remain as menteri besar. — file pic  
"Kedah Umno must show to the people — this is the behaviour of PAS leaders ... when they are in power, they stall state development and try to take each other down," he wrote today.

"With PAS struggling with internal problems now, Kedah Umno should intensify its efforts to get closer to the people, instead of the living out the proverbial saying that 'while PAS suffers in sickness, Umno continues to sleep'," Zulkifli added.

Zulkifli was referring to rumours of a plan to replace Azizan as the Kedah Menteri Besar with another senior state leader due to poor health. English daily The Star had front-paged the news yesterday, claiming that PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang would soon seek an audience with the Kedah Sultan.

The article quoted Azizan as confirming that some leaders had told him to rest on account of his health but he has purportedly refused to do so, saying that he has many things to do.

The article also listed three possible candidates touted to replace Azizan, namely three senior state executive councillors in the Kedah leadership Datuk Phahrolrazi Mohd Zawawi (Pangkalan Kundor), Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah (Anak Bukit) and Datuk Mohamed Taulan Mat Rasul (Tokai).

But Kedah government leaders pleaded ignorance when asked to confirm the move yesterday while Hadi issued an outright denial and confirmed that Azizan will remain as Menteri Besar.

Utusan Malaysia appeared, however, to reject the denials and insisted today that the story merely confirmed the internal leadership tussle within Kedah PAS.

Azizan's bad health, said the paper, merely posed as a "good excuse" for the party's progressives to edge out the conservative faction by "quietly" removing Azizan from helming the state government.

Citing an unnamed political observer, Zulkifli wrote that while the crisis has highlighted the tussle between the party's two factions, it is unclear if the progressives wield more political power than the conservatives in the state administration.

According to the observer, however, he said, Kedah PAS's turmoil will likely continue even if Azizan is replaced.

On a separate note, Zulkifli also claimed the Kedah menteri besar seat is "cursed," which he said had seen many previous leaders vacate the post amid controversy.

"Kedah's political history before this has proven that this curse and fate began with Tan Sri Syed Ahmad Syed Mahmud Shahabuddin, Datuk Seri Syed Nahar Tun Syed Sheh Shahabuddin, Tan Sri Osman Aroff, Tan Sri Sanusi Junid, Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain dan Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid.

"They all left the seat amid controversies. But Azizan's fate seems more likely to follow in the political footsteps of Syed Razak, who was forced to vacate the seat because of health reasons," said Zulkifli.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/utusan-tells-umno-to-exploit-kedah-pas-troubles/>