

Kedah Pakatan govt in crisis

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A SECOND state executive councillor has reportedly declined to be reappointed when his tenure ends on March 12, fuelling speculation that the "Erdogan faction" in Pas is bent on removing Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak.

Party insiders said the two state executive councillors were mere tools of the faction, which was "very supportive" of Parti Keadilan Rakyat de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"Azizan is seen as an obstacle for the Erdogan faction to take control of the party," they said.

The Pas insiders also claimed that the two councillors had arranged for Pas president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang to meet Sultan of Kedah Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah to discuss replacing Azizan as menteri besar when he was warded for a heart ailment last August. However, the meeting never materialised after Azizan got wind of it.

Azizan, who had defied several directives issued by Pakatan Rakyat, is aligned to the ulama group.

The ulama group, led by Hadi, is losing its grip on the party to those who supported Anwar, labelled as "Erdogans" after Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Pas leaders linked to the Erdogan faction included its deputy president, Mohamad Sabu, and vice-president Datuk Mahfuz Omar.

The second state exco member, who submitted his letter declining to accept any post from Azizan, is believed to be a doctor in his 40s. He submitted his letter a few days after his senior colleague did so last Friday. Of the seven Pas councillors in the 10-member state executive council, two of them were doctors.

One of them, Datuk Dr Ismail Salleh, who is state Health Committee chairman, said he did not know if any of his colleagues declined to be reappointed.

Dr Ismail, 47, is a first-term assemblyman for Alor Mengkudu.

The other medical doctor, Datuk Dr Hamdan Mohamad Khalib, 44, who is in charge of Youth and Sports, could not be contacted. He is also a first-term assemblyman for Tanjung Dawai.

Datuk Phahrolrazi Zawawi, believed to be the first councillor who declined to be reappointed, said it was best for him to keep silent.

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