

**Anwar's hand in Pas seen as early as 1999, say analysts**  
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KUALA LUMPUR: The Erdogan faction's hand in restricting the influence of ulama in Pas has been at work since the formation of Pakatan Rakyat in 1999, say political analysts.

Therefore, the ouster bid faced by Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Razak does not come as a surprise because of the growing influence of the the Erdogan faction -- supporters of opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim -- in the party.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia political analyst Prof Dr Samsul Adabi Mamat said this was most apparent in last year's Pas election when Mohamad Sabu defeated former deputy chief Nasharudin Mat Isa for the No. 2 post.

"The result of that party election showed that Pas is now under Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) de facto leader's control."

Samsul said initially, the faction might have planned only to facilitate cooperation between the opposition allies, but it had grown stronger over the years, resulting in Pas having to bend its principles on many issues.

Samsul said Azizan's plight was similar to that faced by former Selangor state executive councillor Datuk Dr Hasan Ali.

"Anyone who is not on the same page with Anwar will be removed."

He said the situation in Kedah was made worse by the fact that Pakatan was ill-prepared to govern a state.

"Azizan joined Pas for its original struggles, and because the party's principles are now decided by Pakatan Rakyat, there have been disagreements in running the state."

Universiti Sains Malaysia's political analyst Dr Azeem Fazwan Ahmad Farouk agreed.

"When you have factionalism in the party, you will see manoeuvring among its members to gain power and better positions for their leaders.

"What is happening in Kedah now is a clear picture of what is going on in Pas."

Former PKR Youth information secretary Nordin Ahmad said PKR interference in Pas was nothing new.

He claimed Anwar had planned everything even before his release from prison.

"Several of Anwar's right-hand men now sit on the Pas central leadership council. Why don't they join PKR?"

"What is happening in Kedah now is proof that pro-Anwar leaders in Pas want to get rid of the ulama and make the party more liberal to gain support, especially from non-Muslims."

Meanwhile, Pas vice-president Salahudin Ayub had asked all party members and supporters to calm down and get information on what was happening in Kedah from legitimate party sources.

"Pas leaders are monitoring this situation closely. All news and speculation will be answered through official party channels."

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