

**KITA leaders to talk about party future sans Zaid**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 7 — Parti Keadilan Insan Tanah Air (KITA) leaders are planning to meet at the end of the month to decide their future ahead of Datuk Zaid Ibrahim's decision to dissolve the party.

"If the party can be free from infestation by undesirable elements and infiltrators without dissolving the party, then it is a preferred option.

"However if the party leadership feels that the best way to prevent the party from being a vehicle to abuse the electoral process is to close the party, then that will be the decision taken," the party's information chief Mohamed Mazlan Abdul Manaf said in a statement today.

He said he agreed with Zaid (picture) that KITA "does not condone dirty tactics and gutter politics" but stressed that the statement was the only president's personal view and was not entirely shared by the other members.

He said the dissolution would only be one of the options that will be discussed at its next central executive committee meeting at the end of this month.

Last Thursday, Zaid said an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) would be held to dissolve KITA following reports of members in Kedah and Penang openly attacking Pakatan Rakyat (PR), "making it clear that they are not interested in real issues and merely want to embarrass and ridicule the opposition."

Several state leaders then held a press conference on Saturday saying they rejected Zaid's bid to dissolve the party and called for his resignation as the proposal was "unprincipled" and "irresponsible".

"While we welcome members who genuinely wish to contest in the elections to fight for the party's manifesto and principles, we will not field candidates whose objective is to 'spoil votes', and who are being used by certain groups to achieve their political aims.

"We will certainly not allow the party to be used in that way," Mohamed Mazlan said.

He also said the party has been "infiltrated by members whose sole agenda appears to be to contest the next general election."

Zaid, a former Umno minister who joined the opposition PKR in mid-2009, had alleged gross abuse in the PR party's election process during his unsuccessful campaign to be deputy president, which eventually led him to form KITA.

But the two-year-old party has been fraught with internal bickering and challenges against Zaid's leadership by other KITA members, who have disagreed with his pro-opposition stand.

Zaid recently announced that KITA will not be contesting the coming polls and promised to offer the party's "unconditional support" to the federal opposition.

The state leaders from Kedah, Selangor and Johor had also said they wanted former Selangor PAS chief Datuk Hasan Ali to lead the party instead of Zaid.

The former Selangor executive councillor last week said he would start a new non-governmental organisation called JATI to continue defending Islam, Malay rights and the Malay Rulers, describing it as a "third force" to help determine who should form the next government.

The Gombak Setia assemblyman was expelled from the party last month for having persistently undermined PAS's leadership.

Hasan has also repeatedly accused the party of deviating from its Islamic cause.

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