

Ex-Kelantan deputy MB to oversee Kedah MB

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'Halim picked to head 5-member Pas panel to offer 'views

FORMER Kelantan deputy menteri besar Datuk Abdul Halim Abdul Rahman will head Pas' new steering committee, formed as part of the solution to the leadership crisis in Kedah.

Pas secretary-general Mustafa Ali, who announced the line-up of the five-member committee, maintained that the panel shall only provide "views" rather than advise the state government.

Mustafa said Halim was selected as he was an experienced leader.

"He was also chosen as he is not involved directly in any matter in the state," Mustafa said after the party's central working committee meeting yesterday.

Other members of the five-member committee are Mustafa, Johor Pas commissioner Datuk Mahfuz Muhammad, Tumpat member of parliament Datuk Kamaruddin Jaafar and Pas central executive committee member and lawyer Asmuni Awi.

The formation of the steering committee was first proposed by Pas' central leadership to resolve the public fallout between Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Azizan Abdul Razak and Kedah Pas Deputy Commissioner 1 Datuk Phahrolrazi Zawawi.

Phahrolrazi and fellow Kedah Pas rebel, Datuk Dr Ismail Salleh, had rejected their reappointment as state executive council members, but have agreed to rejoin following the steering committee-idea.

However, Azizan has on several occasions said the steering committee, aimed at checking his powers as menteri besar, was not in accordance with the state constitution.

In response yesterday, Mustafa said the steering committee would only be providing its views.

"We would not give any advice or opinion that is not in accordance with the constitution."

On fears that the steering committee would intrude on state matters, Mustafa said its main function was to monitor and provide input to the state leadership to ensure the party's election manifesto was properly implemented.

"The committee will play a monitoring and advisory role to all Pas and Pakatan Rakyat-led states, not just Kedah."

Pas deputy president Mohamed Sabu said Pas had had such committees since 1990.

"We have now reactivated it as we feel there is a need to monitor our progress (in carrying out our election promises) at the state level."

In Alor Star, Azizan, when contacted, said: "I am at home and nobody has informed me about the committee's line-up."

"I have nothing to say for now. We will wait for the official news."

Phahrolrazi said the steering committee was timely and could ensure the smoother running of the state government.

"The committee will act as an adviser should there be serious issues hindering the implementation of state government policies and programmes.

"I hope all quarters will accept it in good faith and respect its role."

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