

8 Kedah excos sworn in for new term
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 28 — Eight Kedah state executive councillors (excos) took the oath of office for a new term today at the Istana Anak Bukit in Alor Star, leaving two vacant spots in the state administration led by Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak.

They were Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah, Datuk Mohamed Taulan Mat Rasul, Datuk Dr Hamdan Mohamed Khalib, Lim Soo Nee, Abd Ghani Ahmad, Tan Joon Long @ Tan Chow Kang, Datuk Siti Ashah Ghazali and S. Manikumar, state news agency Bernama reported.

Conspicuously missing were Kedah PAS deputy commissioner I Datuk Phahrolrazi Zawawi and Kedah PAS deputy commissioner II Datuk Dr Ismail Salleh, who had declined to accept their re-appointments.

It has been speculated that Phahrolrazi and Ismail are unhappy with Azizan's (picture) leadership in relation to various issues that have affected his administration in recent years, and have the support of several other excos.

Phahrolrazi, who is reported to be on leave until March 1, previously said he had yet to receive an invitation letter from the state government to attend the swearing-in.

"I respectfully inform you that I am rejecting the appointment as Kedah excos," Phahrolrazi wrote in his letter, specifically mentioning Azizan's appointment offer made on February 15.

The PAS leadership said yesterday it wanted all 10 current Kedah state excos sworn in for the 2012 term, despite Menteri Besar Azizan saying only eight would be reinstated.

PAS secretary-general Datuk Mustafa Ali confirmed rumours that Phahrolrazi and Ismail had declined to accept their re-appointments, but stressed that the matter was only a "technical issue."

He said that PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang had met with Azizan as well as the two excos on February 17, where they had explained to him "difficulties" in continuing their duties.

"The PAS national leadership is taking steps to ensure the smooth running of the Pakatan Rakyat government in Kedah.

"Both excos had written to the MB stating that they were not ready (to carry on their duties). But a letter is not a final decision... it is hoped this can be settled and all excos remain as they are," Mustafa told a news conference yesterday.

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