

Khair Toyo sees no BN candidate for Selangor MB
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

SHAH ALAM, April 2 — Barisan Nasional (BN) does not have a suitable menteri besar candidate for Selangor despite the fact that a general election might be held soon, Dr Mohd Khir Toyo has said.

The former Selangor MB said that although several Umno assemblymen have shown some promise and capability to assume the state's top post, BN has not been able to produce one strong, viable candidate to challenge current MB Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim.

"It's hard. For Selangor I cannot give you an answer like that (who is the next Selangor Umno MB).

"Perhaps they (Umno leaders) are afraid to expose themselves in public so people cannot see them... there has not been a chance given (for anyone) to lead Selangor," Khir (picture) told The Malaysian Insider recently in an exclusive interview.

The Sungai Panjang assemblyman's term as Selangor MB ended when BN lost to Pakatan Rakyat (PR) in the 2008 general election. PR won 36 of the 56 state seats, and PKR's Khalid replaced Khir as MB.

Khir said Selangor was different from other states such as Kelantan, where strong personalities like International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamad had already been touted as the potential MB candidate for Umno.

"Figures like Tok Pa (Mustapa), Selangor has not seen this and that's why we have to work our machinery," said Khir.

The former Umno supreme council member lamented that some Umno state lawmakers who showed potential to become MB did not win with a strong majority in their constituencies in the last general election.

"Then the problem is that you have candidates with seats which are not winnable. You cannot change seats because the base has already been set up there," he added.

Khir denied that he would be offering himself as BN's choice for MB in the next polls, saying that he would be "taking a break" from politics.

"I've got my court case... so for a while I don't think I will contest. There are capable people who can take my place."

Khir also said there was a "possibility" that federal ministers such as Datuk Seri Noh Omar may be brought in to contest in a state seat if no "viable" leaders were found.

"Reshuffling of leaders from national level to state? Maybe.

“(But) Datuk Seri Najib Razak should give (an) indication. Make it his call (to decide on who should lead Selangor),” added Khir.

Prime Minister Najib has said that BN was ready to win the next general election as well as take back Selangor, and that public feedback has been encouraging.

He said people have been telling him BN has regained public support since the 2008 polls.

The PM has said BN must win back Selangor, a key state due to its industrial and natural resources, “at all costs.”

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