

**No cut in Petronas payouts to government, Najib says**  
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**By Ida Lim**

ALOR SETAR, March 29 — Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak is confident Pakatan Rakyat (PR) can retain Kedah in Election 2013, despite Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's influence and in-fighting among PAS leaders in the country's rice-bowl state.

The influential retired prime minister is seen working hard helping Barisan Nasional (BN) regain Kedah, as rumours are rife that a victory will make his son, Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, the coalition's choice for Azizan's job as the Kedah menteri besar.

"As far as I know, while I was the Kedah PAS commissioner, Mahathir has absolutely no impact," said Azizan in an exclusive interview with The Malaysian Insider recently.

"This is because people are angry at him... Mahathir, his time is over. It's gone. I should know, I'm the head of Kedah," he added.

Azizan also said he was not worried if Kedah BN selected Mukhriz, now the deputy minister of international trade and industry, as their candidate for the menteri besar post.

"Mukhriz is no big deal. He does his work, I do mine. This kind of thing is like sailing on a ship in the sea. Sometimes there are huge waves, sometimes there are small waves. It's usual," said Azizan.

The 73-year-old menteri besar also dismissed the effects of in-fighting within PAS between his and PAS Kedah Deputy Commissioner (I) Datuk Ir Phahrolrazi Moh Zawawi's factions.

"All parties have in-fighting. Umno is torn apart now. They're all fighting to be MB... Kedah is the same. They're just trying to make stories up," said Azizan.

Several PAS members were upset when it was said that PAS Kedah sent a new list of candidates to the Islamist party's headquarters in Kuala Lumpur omitting the names of candidates seen to be opposing Azizan, including those who wanted to take him down as menteri besar.

Among those whose seats would be changed or who would be dropped entirely are Kedah executive councillors Phahrolrazi, Datuk Dr Ismail Salleh, Datuk Dr Hamdan Mohamed Khalib, as well as Pendang MP Datuk Dr Mohd Hayati Othman.

The Malaysian Insider understands that Phahrolrazi will be switched from his Pengkalan Kundor state seat to the Jerlun parliamentary seat, while Ismail, Hamdan and Hayati would be dropped to allow PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu to contest the Pendang parliamentary seat.

Asked to confirm this, Azizan said: "I don't know anything yet. Tomorrow, the list of candidates will be issued by the PAS central leadership."

Azizan said that voters should continue to support PR in Kedah because of several measures undertaken by his administration of Malaysia's rice-bowl state, including eliminating

corruption and giving insurance coverage to all senior citizens, regardless of race.

"There is no corruption in Kedah. If there is, just arrest them," said Azizan.

"I give aid to the rakyat without looking at their race. I use the Kifaalah system... all dead people, Malays, Chinese Indians, all get it," added the Sungai Limau assemblyman, referring to an insurance scheme for all senior citizens in Kedah that was first introduced by the Kelantan PAS government.

"I give education, education assistance... I also introduced the Kedah agricultural agenda," said Azizan.

PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said recently that Azizan would continue to lead PAS Kedah as commissioner in facing Election 2013 that must be held by late June, after Parliament is automatically dissolved on April 28.

The 2013 national polls are expected to be the keenest election in recent times, with analysts saying that the outcome is in doubt for the first time in Malaysian history.

The loose pact of PKR, PAS and the DAP, which later formed PR, denied BN its customary two-thirds parliamentary majority in the historic Election 2008, and won Selangor, Perak, Penang, Kedah and Kelantan. BN later regained Perak.

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