

Selangor exco reshuffle may see entry of PKR's Saifuddin as liaison
Malaysian Insider
May 28, 2013
By Ida Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, May 28 — Selangor's state administration may see a reshuffle that will allow PKR secretary-general Datuk Saifuddin Nasution Ismail to join it as a political liaison officer, Sinar Harian reported today.

The Malay-language daily cited a source close to the Selangor Mentri Besar's Office as saying that this had contributed to the delay in deciding the final state executive council line-up.

The proposal to bring in Saifuddin to aid the state was last week agreed upon by Selangor Mentri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim and PKR de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Sinar Harian said.

"Maybe Wednesday will discuss the small reshuffle, Saifuddin will take care of political liaison in Selangor as well as to memantapkan (enhance) the 14th general election.

"He will be tasked with moving the mobilisation machinery to the rural areas to overcome Barisan Nasional (BN) that earnestly wants to rampas semula Selangor in the GE14," the source was quoted as saying by the paper.

Saifuddin (picture) will also be tasked with establishing the state's image as a Pakatan Rakyat (PR)-ruled state and shaking off the view that it is a Barisan Nasional (BN) stronghold. BN had always ruled the state until the opposition took over the state for the first time in 2008.

"Not just 'rebranding' of the state's civil servants, if possible, the government buildings and infrastructure in Selangor can also be painted with other colours, no longer blue (BN)," the source said.

Sinar Harian also said the reshuffle is aimed at improving the development and implementing delayed welfare projects with the expenditure to be drawn from the state's reserve of RM2.65 billion.

"This term Abdul Khalid has already promised to spend Selangor's reserves to implement more welfare programmes for the people," the source said.

During PKR's 9th national congress last weekend, Khalid had acknowledged criticisms that he was not well-versed in politics, with the corporate figure-turned-state leader acknowledging that he was tightfisted with the state's resources.

Khalid then announced he would introduce the post of a "political liaison" in the Selangor Mentri Besar's Office to help out in the state's political affairs, while also pledging to spend more on the people.

Later in a speech, Anwar also said Saifuddin would be given the political liaison post, but told reporters later that Khalid would determine the role that Saifuddin plays.

Saifuddin was the Lunas state assemblyman in 2000 and Machang MP in 2008, but recently

lost the polls contest for the Kulim parliamentary seat in Kedah.

Despite PKR deputy president Azmin Ali reportedly eyeing the Selangor Mentri Besar post, Khalid received the backing of the leaders of the three PR parties — PKR, the DAP and PAS.

Khalid finally filled the post for a second term when he was sworn in on May 14, more than a week after the May 5 polls.

Yesterday, Khalid reportedly said the state exco will be sworn in this Thursday after the Sultan of Selangor gave his consent, but declined to reveal the names or party composition in the line-up.

During Khalid's first term, he was sworn in on March 13, four days after Election 2008, while the state exco members took their oath on March 23.

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