

**Water deal between Putrajaya and Selangor stands even if Anwar is MB, says Muhyiddin
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Amid claims by PKR that it is in the dark over the water deal inked between Putrajaya and Selangor, the deputy prime minister said the agreement was "irrevocable" even if the PKR's Kajang by-election candidate Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim becomes Selangor menteri besar.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed two days ago would not change even if there is a leadership change in the country's most industrialised state.

"The MoU between the federal and state governments are for the benefit of the people to alleviate the water crisis in the Klang Valley with the construction of the Langat 2 treatment plant.

"The terms of the agreement cannot be changed," he said after a walkabout in Kajang today.

On Wednesday, Putrajaya and the Selangor government inked the MoU, which, among others, would enable Selangor to take over four water concessionaires in the state.

The move will cost Selangor RM9.65 billion in compensation to the companies.

The companies are Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor Bhd (Syabas), Puncak Niaga Sdn Bhd (PNSB), Konsortium Abbas Sdn Bhd and Syarikat Pengeluar Air Selangor Holdings Bhd (Splash).

In its place, a consortium will be formed to manage the water industry under state-owned Kumpulan Darul Ehsan Berhad.

In exchange, Selangor agreed to approve the development order for Langat 2 and ensure all necessary approvals would be given within 30 days of the signing of the MoU.

"Both parties have to honour the deal."

In taking a swipe at Anwar, Muhyiddin, who is also Barisan Nasional deputy chairman, said it was "extraordinary" the opposition leader was in the dark over the deal, especially since the former is also Selangor's economic adviser.

"It is strange that Anwar did not know what's happening. This means he has never given any advice and his economic adviser post is just a title.

"But what's important is that Khalid is aware of this because he is the menteri besar and he has the power to decide," he said, referring to Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim who had come under fire from his own party over water agreement in the state.

Anwar had complained that he has no knowledge of this latest development although Khalid did inform him of the progress of the talks between the Selangor and federal governments.

Asked whether this means Khalid has checkmated his boss, Muhyiddin said Khalid might appear not to be politically savvy, but he could see through Anwar's ambition to be the menteri besar.

He said feedback from Kajang residents showed that many were unhappy with the way the by-election was triggered, with most people questioning why a "Penang person wants to take over Selangor".

"Today, he goes to Japan, tomorrow he'll go to the United States, if that's the case, better give your vote to (Datin Paduka) Chew Mei Fun as she will give her full commitment to the local community," he said in promoting BN's candidate for the urban mixed seat.

Polling for Kajang by-election is on March 23 while nomination is on March 11.

MCA president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said the signing of the water deal meant that Anwar and the opposition could no longer politicise the issue.

"This is an important matter and we need the cooperation from everyone to resolve the water crisis faced by consumers," he said.

The MoU comes after four years of negotiation.

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