

Only PAS's Hadi Awang stands in the way of Khalid's removal, say Pakatan sources
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By Anisah Shukry

It has been almost half a year since PKR engineered the Kajang by-election for Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim's eventual ouster, but the Selangor menteri besar remains comfortable in his position by virtue of his links with PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, say Pakatan Rakyat (PR) sources.

While pressure from PKR and DAP mounts against Khalid, the sources told The Malaysian Insider that the "Kajang move" has reached a stalemate as Hadi has, so far, not backed any move to remove Khalid from his top spot in the nation's richest state.

They said, for months, DAP and PKR had discussed among themselves how they could replace Khalid with PKR president and Kajang state assemblyman Datuk Wan Azizah Wan Ibrahim, without incurring Hadi's wrath.

PR's top leaders had even met with Hadi on Khalid's removal, but the PAS leader refused to turn against Khalid, said a PKR source.

"We have given Hadi all the facts: we told him about the Kidex highway, about the Bible seizure, we warned him that PR could lose Selangor if Khalid remains as menteri besar, but he refuses to listen.

"Hadi is entangled with Khalid and in PAS, Hadi's word is gospel," said a senior PKR leader.

The PKR leader said that Hadi was "bound" to Khalid through his son-in-law, Zaharudin Muhammad, whom Khalid had appointed as a manager in charge of spiritual affairs in Perangsang Selangor, a subsidiary of the state investment arm's Kumpulan Darul Ehsan Berhad (KEDB).

Khalid had also appointed Raja Idris Kamaruddin, a member of Hadi's inner circle, as the chief executive officer (CEO) of KEDB, said the source.

"Anyone who controls KEDB and Kumpulan Perangsang, controls Selangor's resources.

"Raja Idris is also the cousin to the sultan, so by having him on his side, Khalid secures the palace and PAS."

The source added that Khalid had used Raja Idris to leak insider information – including the move to make Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim Selangor menteri besar – via Raja Idris's brother, popular blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin.

Elaborating further on Raja Idris's deep ties with the PAS president, the PKR source said when Hadi was Terengganu menteri besar, Raja Idris was a key person in Amanah Saham Gemilang (ASG) and the CEO of TDM Berhad, Terengganu's biggest government-linked company.

The source also said that the ulama faction of Selangor PAS was also in favour of Khalid.

"A lot of the state budget is also given to the PAS executive council members – RM8 million or RM9 million was given for training under the education exco and PAS is free to use it how it likes," the source added.

And while members of the Erdogan faction in PAS are unhappy with Khalid, they must ultimately bow down to their president and the ulama faction, said PKR sources.

The Malaysian Insider understands that during DAP's recent retreat, the issue of Khalid's removal also became a hot topic, with leaders calling for him to be replaced soon.

"DAP is worried we may lose Selangor as Khalid becomes more imperial," a DAP leader told The Malaysian Insider on condition of anonymity.

He said Selangor PAS had been resisting so far but added they were "only posturing", and suggested that they wanted the deputy menteri besar post as a compromise.

A last resort for DAP and Selangor PKR is for those in favour of Khalid's removal – including the PAS Erdogan assemblymen – to call for a vote of no-confidence, said DAP and PKR sources.

But this could backfire on PR as PAS may just walk out of the coalition. The sources also did not discount the possibility that Khalid may call for the assembly to be dissolved and for fresh state elections.

But without the consensus of all three parties, Khalid may just stay on as menteri besar and continue making unpopular decisions without the support of his party colleagues, to the detriment of PR and its hold on Selangor. – June 21, 2014.

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/only-pass-hadi-awang-stands-in-the-way-of-khalids-removal-say-pakatan-sourc>