

## **Why reject Kidex deal but not Penang Tunnel, asks PAS leader**

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A PAS leader appeared to defend Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim over the Kidex deal, saying Pakatan Rakyat (PR) was practising double standards as it should also question the Penang Tunnel project.

Party central committee member Nasrudin Hassan (pic), in a statement posted on his Facebook page today, questioned why PR was silent on Lim Guan Eng's similarly-controversial endeavour.

"I am confused as to why Khalid is being criticised heavily for a project that is not even under his jurisdiction," said the Temerloh MP, referring to the RM2.4 billion Kinrara-Damansara Expressway (Kidex) project.

"But at the same time, this is not happening to the Penang government under Lim's leadership," Nasrudin added.

He said the Penang chief minister and DAP secretary-general was embarking on the RM4.63 billion tunnel project which had also raised protests from residents, much like the Kidex highway in Selangor.

He said unlike Kidex, which was a Putrajaya project, the Penang Tunnel was entirely under the Penang government's responsibility.

"Unfortunately, the tunnel project is being paid by the Penang government and awarded to Construction Zenith BUCG Sdn Bhd through direct negotiations.

"The Penang government is not tied to any quarters. So why use direct negotiation?" he said in the posting.

Nasrudin said that many quarters had questioned the need to build the tunnel, given that the recently launched second bridge was enough to ease traffic

congestion into the island.

He said residents had criticised Lim for allowing more entry points into the island, which was already suffering from serious traffic problems.

“There have also been suggestions that instead of building a tunnel, it is better for Penang to build an affective Light Rail Transit system, which would cost an estimated RM120 million per kilometre and solve traffic woes on the island.

“But Lim’s actions are not been condemned by the PR leaders, unlike Khalid who is being pressured to resign,” said Nasrudin.

He said that Lim’s most "problematic" decision was the way he managed the state’s finances, noting that 2014 was the sixth year Penang had recorded a budget deficit, with the figure now at RM255.44 million.

“What could have been on Lim’s mind that would make him dare to spend so extravagantly on unnecessary projects, at a time when the state’s finances are so critical?

“Where are the voices of the PR leaders in reproaching Lim for his behaviour? Were we not against direct negotiations?”

In contrast, Nasrudin said Khalid was being removed over the Kidex project, which was not even under the Selangor government.

Nasrudin, however, conceded that the project was plagued with problems, but said it was not the Selangor government's responsibility to determine the costs of the project, the concession period and to whom the project should be awarded.

“When it comes to the construction of public infrastructure, the state government cannot reject any application by the federal government to takeover lands.

"In fact, according to the laws, land seizure for public interests is allowed and under their jurisdiction," said Nasrudin.

In defending Khalid, he said the MB's administration had done what it could to alleviate woes faced over the highway project, noting that it had ordered the developer to carry out a Public Opinion Survey and present its findings to the state government on November 14.

"The state government has also ordered that dialogue sessions and public briefings be held to allow LLM and Kidex Sdn Bhd to present all the details of its projects, including costs, expected benefits, risks, and negative impacts, as well to accept the views of the locals."

The Kidex highway was among the six reasons PKR said it felt Khalid should be removed as Selangor menteri besar.

In a dossier released to PR's top leaders yesterday, the party said the issues which affected the two-term menteri besar's integrity included his RM66.67 million out-of-court debt settlement with Bank Islam and the subsequent deals on the sale of state land to developers; the controversial Kidex highway project, the Selangor water deal with Putrajaya and issues related to hikes in business license fees, rubbish collection and potholes.

Although both PKR and DAP have openly declared that they want Khalid out, Nasrudin is part of the ulama faction in PAS that wants the embattled menteri besar to serve out his full term.

PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang, alongside its spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat and the party's Ulama wing, have thrown their support behind Khalid, causing a rift between the opposition pact.

PKR today expressed its full support for party president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to replace Khalid as menteri besar, to complete the Kajang Move the party had initiated in January.

Both PAS and DAP will hold separate meetings this Sunday to decide on their stand over PKR's proposal to appoint Dr Wan Azizah as menteri besar.

The PAS ulama will hold a special prayer tomorrow ahead of Sunday's central committee meeting to allow Khalid to stay on as menteri besar.

Nasrudin earlier today compared Khalid's possible sacking from PKR to Umno's sacking of PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim in 1998.

"If Khalid is sacked by Anwar from the menteri besar post under the pretext of several allegations, it is fair for PAS, led by Hadi, to rise and protect Khalid through Gerak 2.0!" Nasrudin wrote on his Facebook page. – August 6, 2014

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