

Dr Mahathir says okay to give only one name for MB post
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OLEH LEE SHI-IAN

It has always been convention to submit one name to the state ruler when appointing a menteri besar, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

During his time in office, the ex-premier said, he had never submitted more than one name and this had not been a problem with any of the state rulers.

"Perhaps times have changed and additional names have to be submitted," Dr Mahathir said when asked to comment about the Selangor menteri besar crisis at a book launch he attended in Kuala Lumpur today.

But, he said PKR was being "annoying" in the present crisis and should not expect to receive any attention.

"If you have been an annoying presence, surely you do not expect anyone to pay attention to you," he said, referring to the party's role in the current impasse.

PKR had first wanted to replace Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim but when he refused to step down and make way for Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, he was sacked from the party.

Then, it submitted only one name – party president Dr Wan Azizah – to the Selangor palace when the Sultan had decreed that all Pakatan Rakyat parties must submit more than two names for the menteri besar's post.

Following a reprimand, PKR sought forgiveness from the Sultan and is now waiting for the palace's response before submitting additional names.

Dr Mahathir said the request for additional candidates was because the Selangor palace did not want a "remote-controlled" menteri besar.

"The Sultan of Selangor might want someone who will take care of the rakyat's needs and develop the state to higher levels."

Dr Mahathir had previously blamed PKR de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for the mess in Selangor.

"Anwar wants to become the prime minister, hence the Selangor menteri besar position is a stepping stone for him."

The bitter tussle between Khalid and Pakatan Rakyat culminated in his sacking by PKR.

Khalid then sacked five DAP and PKR exco members, while another resigned. He only retained four PAS exco members, the minimum required to keep the state government functioning.

Khalid has tendered his resignation but the Sultan of Selangor has deferred it until a new menteri besar is appointed.

The impasse is still on as the palace waits for PKR and DAP to submit additional names, a move constitutional experts say is not necessary as Dr Wan Azizah already has the support of the majority of Selangor legislators.

PAS, in defiance of its Pakatan allies, had submitted three names to the palace. – September 11, 2014.

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