

Azmin: I don't imagine myself as prime minister

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By Adam Abu Bakar

PKR deputy president says the people will determine who is qualified to be the prime minister.

SHAH ALAM: Selangor Menteri Besar Mohamed Azmin Ali says he does not see the possibility of himself being picked to be the prime minister.

He said his focus at the moment is to strengthen the state government under his leadership.

"I have not thought about it (the possibility of becoming prime minister) because I am busy developing Selangor," he told reporters at the Raja Tun Uda Library here today.

Azmin, who is PKR deputy president, was appointed menteri besar on Sept 23, 2014, by the Selangor ruler, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah.

Before his appointment, he consistently denied that he would replace the then-incumbent Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, dismissing the speculation as rumours.

At that time, PKR had nominated its president, Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, as the sole candidate to take over from Khalid.

Besides Azmin, two PAS executive councillors, Iskandar Abdul Samad and Dr Ahmad Yunus Hairi, were also speculated to be in the running for the menteri besar's post.

Azmin said the issue of who would be the prime minister should Pakatan Harapan (PH) come to power was not a priority of the coalition at present because it was in the midst of working on streamlining its structure.

"Right now, we want to determine the structure of PH and concentrate on preparations to face the 14th general election.

"InsyaAllah, when we receive the support and mandate of the people, we can discuss who is qualified to lead the new government. But I believe that is not a problem that will bring down PH because we have our priorities," he said.

Also, he said, the issue of Dr Mahathir Mohamad as a candidate for the post of prime minister if PH won the general election did not arise.

“Whether he is qualified or not would in the end be decided by the people. I believe we must abide by the principle that the people determine the future of the nation, not individuals or political parties,” he added.

The issue of choosing a prime minister-designate from among the opposition leaders became more challenging with the entry of PPBM into PH joining PKR, DAP and Amanah.

Before, the choice appeared to have been clear-cut with PKR, DAP and Amanah agreeing to designate PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim as the PH candidate for prime minister.

Leaders of PH held up placards with the slogan “Anwar 7th PM” at PKR’s 12th annual congress recently — except for Dr Mahathir and PPBM president Muhyiddin Yassin.

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