

Swearing in of councillors put off

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SHAH ALAM: The Klang Municipal Council (MPK) has postponed the swearing in of its councillors following questions over the appointment of three members of the same family.

The ceremony, originally set for today, has been put off and is almost certain to only take place after the festive season.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo who confirmed this, declined to give reasons for the postponement.

MPK president Abdul Bakir Zin said the decision to postpone was made following a directive from Dr Khir.

"The decision would also give us ample time to go through the proposed councillors list," he said.

He added that it would also enable MPK to reconsider

some of the names proposed.

There has been a public outcry following the revelation that three members of a family — Port Klang assemblyman Datuk Zakaria Mat Deros, his son Zainuri and daughter-in-law Roselinda Abdul Jamil — will be sworn in.

Zainuri is acting Klang Umno Youth chief and Roselinda is Klang Puteri Umno chief.

Meanwhile, Dr Khir confirmed that he had received a report from MPK regarding the status of Zakaria's bungalow in Kampung Idaman, Pandamaran.

He said he had instructed MPK to take stern action against Zakaria for not submitting plans for the mansion, dubbed "Istana Zakaria" (Zakaria's Palace).

"Nobody is above the law. I want them to give him the maximum fine.

"In this case, the planning fees are RM2,400, so he will

have to pay RM24,000 in fines," he told reporters after the State Executive Council meeting.

Asked whether any action

would be taken against Zakaria, considering he was a serving MPK councillor, Dr Khir said the only action which could be taken was

what was stated in the law — a maximum fine of 10 times the fees involved.

"We cannot act on emotion. The law does not say that a person (who does not submit a building plan) cannot be appointed as a councillor," he said. However, Dr Khir said he would submit a report later to the Umno leadership over the issue.

"If the leadership wants to take action, it is up to them."

Zakaria made headlines after ignoring building regulations by failing to submit building plans for the house built on 43,000sq ft of land alienated to his wife, Datin Zizah Ngah. A stop-work order was issued last Wednesday and he now has up to Nov 15 to submit plans.

The land in question originally comprised eight small lots. These were later consolidated into one lot and sold to Zizah.

The property was bought for just RM180,000, a far cry from its estimated worth of RM1.3 million based on the lower end of the going rate for land in the area. Land there is usually sold at between RM30 and RM40 per sq ft.

A proposal to build the house was first submitted by an architect on Dec 23, 2002.

A plan was then submitted by a Kuala Lumpur-based firm to the council on Dec 14, 2004, but the plan could not be processed as fees were not paid.

A final reminder was sent to the firm and Zakaria on Feb 24. However, the firm pulled out of the project in June. The council issued a letter on June 12 to Zakaria directing him to appoint a new architect.

A reminder was sent on Aug 24, giving him two weeks to do so, but nothing has been submitted till today.