

## **PKR denies sultan rejected Wan Azizah**

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PKR has today insisted that the Selangor sultan has not spurned party's president Wan Azizah Wan Ismail's bid to be the state's new menteri besar.

PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution said this in response to PAS' disapproval of Wan Azizah as menteri besar, citing the sultan's reservations.

"His highness is wise about the state's constitution. To date, PKR understands that his highness the Selangor sultan is open to it (Wan Azizah's nomination) and will decide (on the matter) based on the principles of law," said Saifuddin in a statement today.

Saifuddin said his statement was in response to "misinformation" that had come out following PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's meeting with 13 of 15 Selangor PAS state assemblypersons yesterday.

Two PAS state representatives - Saari Sungib (Hulu Kelang) and Hasnul Baharuddin (Morib) - were excluded from the meeting for unilaterally backing Wan Azizah.

Saifuddin said the misinformation included the fact that PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's meeting with Abdul Hadi on Aug 11 was to secure a letter of support for Wan Azizah from the PAS leader.

"The information spread about Anwar supposedly bringing a letter of support to the meeting is false and a lie...," said Saifuddin.

PAS met DAP in secret

He added that Anwar had travelled to Kuala Terengganu to meet Abdul Hadi after finding out that PAS leaders had met DAP leaders in Kuala Lumpur on Aug 9 without PKR's knowledge to convince them against backing Wan Azizah.

"After being informed of this development by DAP, Anwar made the decision to personally meet Abdul Hadi to discuss how to repair the relationship between the parties in Pakatan," he said.

Despite PAS secretary-general Mustafa Ali insisting that the party was not rejecting Wan Azizah because of her gender and that the real reason had been conveyed to PKR, Saifuddin said he had no knowledge of this.

"The public know that certain PAS leaders reject her (Wan Azizah) because she is a woman.

"To date, PAS top leadership has yet to give clear reasons why they continue to make statements against the nomination of Wan Azizah even though PAS central committee has yet to convene," he said.

The PAS central committee will meet tomorrow to discuss the matter.

'Respect PKR's choice'

Saifuddin urged the menteri besar issue be resolved within the framework of Pakatan, adding that had this been the case, the crisis would have been resolved at the Pakatan leadership on July 23. That meeting was instead postponed.

He added that Pakatan has always respected the nominating party's choice, and in the case of Selangor, it is PKR's.

"The issue of other parties proposing other names does not arise and it can be interpreted as going against agreed principles and this could cause friction among leaders in allied parties."

Saifuddin urged PAS to take into consideration that Wan Azizah has the support of 30 state representatives - 13 from PKR, 15 from DAP and two from PAS - in the 56-member Selangor assembly.

PAS has in recent days interpreted the sultan's refusal to grant an audience to Wan Azizah in an Aug 10 letter as a rejection of her candidacy for menteri besar.

However, that was before she revealed the majority she had commanded in the House.

PKR is attempting to replace Abdul Khalid Ibrahim as menteri besar, who has since been sacked from the party for refusing to step down from his post.

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