

## **Azmin prays for the best, sec-gen insists on Azizah**

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PKR has insisted that its president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail becomes the next Selangor menteri besar but PAS today added PKR deputy president Azmin Ali's name to the equation.

When contacted, Azmin said he would only weigh in on the matter after the PKR and Pakatan Rakyat meetings this afternoon to address the PAS' decision.

"This decision would be brought to the Pakatan meeting for discussion. Only after that, will I give my statement," he told Malaysiakini.

"We pray for the best," he added.

PAS' decision takes Azmin, whose supporters have long advocated for him to become Selangor menteri besar, closer to the post.

But PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution told Malaysiakini that the opposition coalition would only present one name to the sultan, even though PAS proposed two.

However, as to whether Saifuddin's assertion stands will depend on the outcome of the PKR and Pakatan meetings later today, which will be followed by an official announcement in the evening.

"I hope we can arrive at a consensus to propose one name to the sultan at the meeting this evening, that is Wan Azizah as the Selangor menteri besar," Saifuddin said.

'Azmin's nomination needs consensus'

Saifuddin, who was defeated by Azmin for the PKR deputy presidency in the party polls, declined to specifically address the latter's nomination by PAS.

He merely said the new name proposed by PAS must be deliberated by PKR and DAP, which have both backed Wan Azizah.

"The new name has to be agreed by DAP and PKR. For now, PKR is bound by the July 23 decision by the PKR central leadership to nominate Wan Azizah.

"With PAS nominating a new name, it is a new development that has yet to receive Pakatan's consensus," he said.

The PAS decision was "significant" as PKR already settled on Wan Azizah, Saifuddin added.

Nonetheless, he said, the fact that PAS also nominated Wan Azizah meant there was at least consensus for the PKR president to be menteri besar.

At the more than two-hour PAS central committee meeting today, aside from nominating Wan Azizah and Azmin, the party also withdrew support for Khalid but said its four exco members would remain in the state government to ensure it can still function.

This is despite Khalid having already been sacked by PKR and is now an independent member of the state assembly.

'Pakatan shouldn't work under independents'

However, Saifuddin said Pakatan would seek an explanation for this stance.

"The rationale and explanations can be given later. The principle is that if we are in the Pakatan component party, we cannot support an independent assemblyperson as the menteri besar.

"That is the principle. We only support our component party members," he said.

Notwithstanding this, Saifuddin said, Khalid now has only the support of 12 Umno state assemblypersons against 43 from Pakatan and he should therefore resign.

Meanwhile, Selangor DAP chief Tony Pua, when contacted by Malaysiakini on the PAS decision, said his party would only comment after the meetings later today.

Previously, it was speculated that the deadlock over the post of Selangor menteri besar was because PAS had insisted that PKR names other candidates for the post and allows the sultan to choose.

However, Wan Azizah's husband and PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim is said to be adamant about his wife helming the state.

There was also speculation that PAS was informed that the sultan was opposed to Wan Azizah's candidacy.

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