

Despite being nominated, Azmin backs Azizah for MB

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In a move that will diffuse tension in PKR, the party's deputy president Mohamed Azmin Ali has backed PKR party president Wan Azizah Wan Ismail to be the new Selangor menteri besar.

This was despite being nominated as an alternative candidate to his boss for the top post by PAS.

In a joint statement today, Pakatan said Azmin (right) supported Wan Azizah to replace embattled Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid.

"YB Mohamed Azmin stressed that he still supports PKR's decision to nominate Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as the candidate for the new Selangor menteri besar," it said.

The statement was issued jointly by PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and PAS deputy president Mohamad Sabu.

The decision was made after more than three hours of deliberation this afternoon, first by PKR's top leadership then followed by Pakatan's top guns.

The meetings were convened in response to the PAS central committee meeting which this morning finally withdrew its support for Khalid and nominated Wan Azizah and Azmin as candidates for menteri besar

However, the additional nomination of Azmin forced PKR and Pakatan to deliberate on the matter as PKR had already decided on Wan Azizah.

PKR passed ball to Pakatan

Shortly before Pakatan's meeting this evening, PKR leaders were in discussion for more than two hours but finally decided that it would stick with Wan Azizah as the party's chosen candidate.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior leader told Malaysiakini that PKR decided to pass the ball on Azmin to Pakatan Rakyat which convened its meeting immediately after PKR's.

PKR Youth's last-minute support for Azmin as an alternative candidate failed to convince the party.

"PKR Youth, in a meeting a while ago, agreed to propose to the PKR leadership council to re-consider PAS' proposal to have PKR deputy president Azmin Ali as a second candidate," the wing's secretary Julailey Jemadi said in a brief statement late this afternoon.

The endorsement was a renewed bid for PKR Youth to push for Azmin to be the next Selangor menteri besar.

Azizah's name to be submitted first

Meanwhile, the sources claimed that the PKR meeting also proposed that Wan Azizah's name be sent to the palace first and if this is rejected, then Azmin's name would be submitted.

Earlier, sources told Malaysiakini that DAP leaders are agreeable to both Wan Azizah or Azmin taking over the MB post.

PAS secretary-general Mustafa Ali (right) previously said the party "heard" that the ruler is opposed to Wan Azizah helming the state.

The palace, which endorsed Khalid's leadership on Aug 11, had rejected the PKR president's request for an audience.

After last week's show of support, Wan Azizah, who revealed that she has the backing of 30 assemblypersons, had submitted a second written request to meet the ruler.

With PAS supporting Wan Azizah and Azmin, it means that a total of 43 wakil rakyat are in favour of Khalid being replaced.

Following the PAS central committee meeting this morning, Khalid said he would wait for the sultan, who is currently abroad, to return on Aug 27 before deciding on the next step.

Selangor crisis today

10.19am: An expected stand-off outside the PAS HQ fizzles after the Black Ribbon campaign cancels its protest as the PAS central committee convenes a long awaited meeting.

11.41am: Embattled Selangor MB Abdul Khalid Ibrahim's top strategist Faekah Husin likened PKR's accusation against her boss to a 'hatchet job' book on Anwar Ibrahim in 1998.

12.28pm: PAS central committee unanimously withdraws support for Khalid. The party nominates PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and her deputy Azmin Ali as replacements.

12.58pm: Azmin is tight-lipped about his sudden nomination and says to pray for the best.

PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution insists that Wan Azizah is the sole candidate for MB as previously decided by PKR.

2pm: Khalid says he accepts PAS' decision and will seek an audience with the Selangor sultan on how to proceed.

2.08pm: PKR Youth publicly endorses PAS' proposal for Azmin to be the alternative candidate for menteri besar, just hours before PKR's leadership meeting.

3pm: Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin mocks Pakatan Rakyat, claiming PAS' additional nomination of Azmin was a veiled stab at Anwar and PKR.

6pm: Sources tells Malaysiakini that PKR decided to stick with Wan Azizah over Azmin after more than two hours of deliberation by its leaders in Subang Jaya.

7.29pm: Pakatan, which held its meeting immediately after PKR's, confirms it will only propose Wan Azizah as menteri besar after discussing for around an hour.

8.24pm: Azmin says he will comply with PKR's decision to propose Wan Azizah as menteri besar and voices support for his boss despite his own nomination.

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