

PKR tells its Selangor reps to swear support for Wan Azizah
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BY THE MALAYSIAN INSIDER

PKR has asked all its Selangor assemblymen to swear support for Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as the state menteri besar (MB) by today, in a bid to isolate embattled incumbent Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim who refuses to quit

The directive issued came just hours after it called Khalid yesterday to attend a disciplinary board hearing today to explain his refusal to step down as Selangor MB

The Malaysian Insider sighted a copy of a statutory declaration sent to at least 12 of the 14 PKR state assemblymen in Selangor. The sworn statement affirms the assemblymen had lost faith in Khalid as MB and pledges support for Dr Wan Azizah to take over the job.

A PKR source said the assemblymen will have to sign the forms and hand them over to party de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim by 10am today.

It is not known yet if all PKR assemblymen have signed the statutory declaration ahead of a Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leadership meeting scheduled for Sunday.

"The move is to solidify support for Dr Wan Azizah in Selangor. She has support from the top leadership, now it must come from Selangor lawmakers," a party insider said.

The other two PR parties, DAP and PAS, will decide on Sunday and Wednesday respectively if they support Dr Wan Azizah as the state MB. The three parties hold 44 out of the 56 state seats in the Selangor legislative assembly.

The top PAS leadership and its clerics' council have publicly backed Khalid to stay on as MB of the country's wealthiest state, a stand which risks a coalition break-up.

A former corporate figure, Khalid is in his second term as MB who used to enjoy the party's support despite resentment from Selangor PKR led by deputy president Azmin Ali.

Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail in Ampang last night. She says her party has named only her as the Selangor MB's replacement. – The Malaysian Insider pic, August 8, 2014. Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail in Ampang last night. She says her party has named only her as the Selangor MB's replacement. – The Malaysian Insider pic, August 8, 2014. His decisions to agree to a Putrajaya water restructuring plan and a privatised tolled highway despite Pakatan's objections have strained his relationship with his party and allies, leading to a hard push for him to quit his post.

The PR leadership council decided on July 23 that the Selangor MB will continue to be a PKR assemblyman despite the party having fewer seats than DAP and PAS, which have 15 each.

The council had also decided to consider Dr Wan Azizah to be the new MB, although PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang later said he preferred Khalid to stay on in the post.

There has also been talk of alternative candidates, including Ijok assemblyman Dr Idris Ahmad or Azmin, but Dr Wan Azizah shrugged off the suggestions last night.

"The party has chosen me, thank you" was her brief reply when met by reporters at a dinner event with Ampang residents in Selangor.

She was responding to reports that Selangor PKR secretary Amirudin Shari and state information chief Shuhaimi Shafei wanted Azmin to be named a candidate alongside Dr Wan Azizah, citing his vast experience in the party.

The crisis also saw Khalid getting unexpected support from Selangor Umno, which has 12 lawmakers in the state assembly. There is speculation that the impasse could lead to a snap election.

PR insiders say the coalition is prepared for fresh polls which could see them lose a few seats but still retain the state government, first won in 2008 from Barisan Nasional (BN). – August 8, 2014.

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