

## **Khalid denies he was Pakatan's sole candidate for MB post in 2008 and 2013**

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**BY ANISAH SHUKRY**

Embattled Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim denied today that he was Pakatan Rakyat's sole candidate for the top post in the state in 2008 and 2013, contradicting claims made by the pact last night.

"The story is not properly reported. There were also other instances where separate applications were made both by PKR and PAS in 2008 and 2013," he told a press conference at the state secretariat building.

"There was no one name... there were more than one name being submitted from time to time to the palace."

Last night, PKR and DAP said they would submit only Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail's name as the sole candidate for the menteri besar post, despite the Sultan of Selangor's decree that each PR party submit more than two names to him.

They said that Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah last year had accepted Khalid as the sole candidate to take up the post, despite the ruler similarly requesting for more than one nominee.

"Because of that, PKR and DAP uphold the sultan's decree and will present Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah's candidacy for the sultan's consideration, in line with the convention practised by PR in 2013, as she has the support of at least 30 assemblymen," the two parties said in a joint statement last night.

The statement was signed by PKR secretary-general Datuk Saifuddin Nasution Ismail and DAP publicity chief Tony Pua.

Earlier today, opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had also said that Khalid's was the only name sent to the palace last year, even though the sultan had asked for four names.

But Khalid clarified today that the parties had submitted separate letters nominating other candidates, apart from himself.

"Yes, in 2008 and 2013. In addition to my name. By a different letter. There were instances," he said.

However, Khalid refused to comment on PKR and DAP's decision to disregard the sultan's decree and stand by its decision to nominate only Dr Wan Azizah.

He added that he could not be a part of the palace's decision-making as he had vested interest in the matter.

"I understand the letter (to the parties) will be sent today. I hope the palace will not send a copy to me. I don't want to be the owner of the information," he said in jest.

PAS Selangor Commissioner Iskandar Abdul Samad, who was also at the press conference, said he would attend a meeting with PAS secretary-general Datuk Mustafa Ali tonight before commenting on his party's stand on the matter.

The Islamist party had not signed last night's statement endorsing Dr Wan Azizah as the sole candidate, prompting Anwar earlier today to urge PAS to abide by the PR leadership council's decision on August 17.

"There is a meeting tonight with the secretary-general. We will decide then. I will give my comment then," said Iskandar, who is the state executive councillor in charge of housing.

"Everything will be decided by the PAS central committee. There has been no discussions of another candidate as we have not had a meeting."

On August 17, the PR presidential council had announced Dr Wan Azizah as the sole candidate to replace Khalid, who had been sacked from PKR on August 9 for defying party orders to step down.

But several PAS members were unhappy with the decision and felt a second candidate was necessary in case the palace objected to her candidacy.

The Islamist party had originally proposed that both Dr Wan Azizah and her deputy, Azmin Ali, be considered as candidates.

But Azmin was bound by his party's decision to nominate only Dr Wan Azizah and had already signed a statutory declaration supporting her as menteri besar.

Khalid yesterday tendered his resignation to the Sultan of Selangor, but the ruler chose to defer it until a new menteri besar is appointed. – August 27, 2014.

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