

BN chief launches attack on Anwar
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak on Sunday launched a blistering attack on Anwar Ibrahim and his opposition alliance as he rallied his ruling coalition to prepare for early elections.

bn convension 20101205 najib 02The ruling Barisan Nasional coalition does not have to call fresh polls until 2013 but there is intense speculation it will call snap polls early next year, after a series of morale-boosting by-election victories.

Najib told some 2,300 cheering delegates at a coalition convention that elections will be held "soon" and that the political juggernaut which has ruled for more than half a century would not be unseated.

"We will rule for another 50 years. We have to work hard. We have to achieve bigger success. We cannot be complacent," he said.

But he warned the leaders of his 13-party coalition that they must heed the lessons of 2008 elections when Anwar's opposition snatched away a third of parliamentary seats and five states in an unprecedented result.

"I have warned that if we do not change, we are doomed," he said. "The parties have been hit by four illnesses - delusion, amnesia, inertia and arrogance. All these weakness, especially arrogance, will make voters hate us."

bn convension 20101205 crowd 03The coalition is led by the dominant United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) which represents majority Muslim Malays, and an array of race-based parties representing ethnic Chinese, Indians and others.

Large numbers of minority voters stampeded towards the opposition in 2008, rejecting the coalition as inept and corrupt, but since Najib came to power last year he has gone some way to luring them back.

Najib on Sunday launched one of his most bitter attacks on Anwar and the opposition, describing them as "anti-national elements" who were bent on destroying the country.

"Beware everyone, be careful everyone, they are very dangerous, they will do anything, including bad mouthing Malaysia abroad," he said.

"I want to say here that they are anti-national. We must oppose them to the end and ensure that this country is not destroyed by their despicable activities."

'Ready if polls held tomorrow'

NONENajib took aim at the unlikely alliance which takes in Anwar's Keadilan, the fundamentalist Islamic party PAS, and the liberal, Chinese-based Democratic Action Party (DAP).

"The DAP and PAS can sleep on the same bed but they have different dreams," he said.

Senior UMNO figure Mukhriz Mahathir, the son of former premier Mahathir Mohamad, said the coalition was in "high gear" and "ready for the polls if it was called tomorrow."

- AFP

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