

Opposition leader : we're a 'government in waiting'
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Opposition figurehead Anwar Ibrahim said today that the three parties he rallied to stunning election results were a "government in waiting". MCPX

anwar ibrahim pc 110308 5Anwar, a former deputy premier who has made a spectacular political comeback after being sacked and jailed a decade ago, said he is in no hurry to return to parliament when a ban on his taking public office expires next month.

"I have not dealt with this issue yet. My priority now is to assist and help the state governments to establish themselves," he said, after the opposition took four states from the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition as well as retaining another one in Saturday polls.

"I will attend parliament. But I will be in the public gallery.

He laughed off a question about whether he saw himself as a future prime minister, but he made his ambitions clear.

"I don't like the term 'opposition head'. We are the government in waiting," he told a press conference.

Blistering personal attacks

Anwar has previously said he will return to parliament through a by-election in a seat held by his PKR party after April, when the ban related to a corruption conviction expires.

anwar ibrahim pc 110308 1PKR won 31 seats for the biggest opposition presence in the new 222-seat parliament, while the predominantly Chinese DAP won 28 and the Islamic party PAS won 23.

Sitting on the opposition benches will be Anwar's wife, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, who extended a majority in her parliamentary seat in Saturday's poll, and his daughter, Nurul Izzah Anwar, who won in her first attempt.

Anwar weathered blistering personal attacks during the campaign from Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's ruling party, which was clearly rattled as he criss-crossed the nation delivering barn-storming speeches.