

PKR Youth : 16 BN MPs ready to jump ship
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Fauwaz Abdul Aziz

PKR Youth claimed today that up to 16 Barisan Nasional parliamentarians are ready to hop over to the opposition coalition. MCPX

"We have up to 15 to 16 MPs from BN, including Umno MPs, who want to join PKR," party's Youth chief Shamsul Iskandar Mohamad Akin said at a press conference today.

Shamsul denied that PKR was offering money to buy over the parliamentarians.

Far from encouraging them to defect, he said that the MPs had voluntarily held talks with PKR to discuss crossing over.

"They have come and met (PKR de facto leader) Anwar Ibrahim because they have lost faith in the leadership of Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. They are not crossing over for monetary gains," he said.

"If they want to come over, we will accept them but we are against buying them over."

He nevertheless urged BN elected representatives to join the opposition parties to become part of the 'new hope' engulfing the country.

pkryouth pc 230308 khairul anuar Meanwhile, Youth deputy chief Khairul Annuar Ahmad Zainuddin said 'hopping' out of BN should not be seen as betrayal of either the ruling coalition or voters.

Rather, the move will help them fulfill the hopes of the people who have long sought change and to improve their lives, he said.

"We want to relay this message to any BN member of parliament (or state assembly person) harbouring hope (for change) and wishing to participate in this new hope for Malaysia: 'Don't worry. Be steely in your resolve'.

"What you are doing is giving hope to the people to leave the old regime and to build a new order."

pkryouth pc 230308 ful scene Khairul was responding to speculation that PKR has been courting BN elected representatives, particularly in Sabah and Sarawak, in a bid to gain control of the federal government.

In the 12th general election concluded on March 8, the opposition parties - PKR, DAP and PAS - won 82 seats in Parliament, while BN captured 140.

The opposition coalition needs 30 MPs to defect before it can claim the right to form government.

Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor has since describe PKR's bid to get BN MPs to cross over as a form of bribery.

Denying the accusation today, Shamsul said the party was approached by BN elected representatives to discuss possible defection.

"This (bribery allegation) is only an attempt to divert the people's attention from the weaknesses and rifts within Umno," he said.

"The issue of (PKR) buying (BN MPs) was raised by Umno. (Otherwise) it doesn't arise. They came to meet and discuss with us," he said.

Shamsul confirmed that most of the MPs planning to hop over are from Sabah and Sarawak.

vk lingam tape scandal tengku adnan mansor 041007He also said it is 'telling' that Umno could not come up with anyone better than Tengku Adnan to cast such aspersions, given the former deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department is implicated in alleged fixing of judicial appointments. (Tengku Adnan has denied this.)

Why the potential cross-overs

PKR sources have acknowledged that discussions with the BN elected representatives have included the issue of ministerial or state government positions to be offered in the event PKR takes over the federal government.

When asked whether offers of government positions amount to 'bribery', Shamsul said, "They (the BN MPs) contacted Keadilan leadership... primarily because they have lost hope in the BN leadership... and in Abdullah Ahmad Badawi," he said.

On why these individuals did not join PKR before the general election if they believe so much in Anwar and the reform agenda, Shamsul said they probably did not expect the opposition parties to gain control over four states and 82 parliamentary seats.

pkcr youth pc 230308 samsul iskandar mat akin"I think their perception was that BN would win a tremendous victory," he said, adding that the opposition's results made them consider joining PKR more seriously.

Khairul said the MPs who choose to remain in BN are the ones betraying the mandate of the people.

Speaking of the low socio-economic standards in which many people have languished despite 50 years of BN rule, Khairul said the people have shown they want change when they voted for opposition parties.

"Are we going to reject the signal from the people who have given us the mandate?" he asked.

Claiming that party-hopping is part and parcel of the democratic process, Khairul said he is confident that PKR elected representatives will not join BN.

ahmad said 230308On the crisis in Terengganu following the Regency Advisory Council's appointment of BN's Kikal state assemblyperson Ahmad Said as menteri besar, Shamsul urged BN to respect the institution of the constitutional monarchy.

"The ones who chose the leaders are the people. The elections were organised, the elected

representatives were chosen, and the sultan has the choice of selecting the head (of the state government). That is provided for in the state constitution. You have to respect that," he said.

All 22 BN state assemblypersons have backed the previous MB, Idris Jusoh.

Abdullah, who is Umno president, has said the appointment as "unconstitutional".

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