

**Azmin : BN MPs ready to cross
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Beh Lih Yi**

Opposition party PKR today claimed it has received "overwhelming" responses from the ruling Barisan Nasional parliamentarians looking to defect to the Anwar Ibrahim-led party. MCPX

pkrc 100408 azmin "It was out of our expectation. We only need 30 more seats, but the response is so overwhelming now, 30 seats are the minimum (we can get)," PKR vice-president Azmin Ali told reporters at the party headquarters in Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur today.

Azmin said this when asked on the progress of the negotiation and the number of BN MPs that the oppositions have held talks with. He did not indicate as to which BN-affiliated parties these MPs belong to.

Last Saturday, Azmin was reported to have said the party has already persuaded "close to 30" BN MPs to reject the leadership of its chairperson and Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Pressed for more details today, Azmin said PKR will make further announcement at a right time.

"It is Abdullah who is running out of time, we are not, we will announce the details at a right time," noted Azmin, who is also the Gombak MP and Bukit Antarabangsa state assemblyperson.

Not against people's interest

He brushed aside suggestions that such defections would be against the voters' interest as the MPs were elected under the BN banner in the first place.

"We did not offer any money to them (to crossover), what we offered is that their voters will be defended with fairness and justice," he said.

In the March 8 polls, the ruling BN lost its two-thirds majority in Parliament when its candidates won only 140 seats. Opposition parties PKR, DAP and PAS won the remaining 82 seats.

The three parties - now called the Pakatan Rakyat alliance - also captured four states while PAS retained its control over Kelantan.

Since the elections, PKR is said to have been courting BN MPs, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, in a bid to wrest the required 30 parliamentary seats to form the federal government.