

Jeffrey Kitingan : Pakatan can deliver
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PKR vice-president Dr Jeffrey Kitingan had urged all Sabah parliamentarians and leaders to throw their weight behind de facto party leader Anwar Ibrahim to bring change to the state.

Sabah MPs and leaders should regard it as a 'duty' to support Anwar as prime minister and Pakatan Rakyat as the alternative government, he said in a statement yesterday.

"Due to the tremendous political benefits such a change could bring to Sabah and Sarawak, the current political situation is something that may never present itself again.

"It should be appreciated as a unique opportunity for Sabah and Sarawak to come together and renegotiate what they want.

"It's like rewriting history and a chance to correct past shortcomings as well as to make a New Deal for Sabah, why not?" he asked.

Special rights eroded

In the 12th General Election in March this year, the opposition grabbed five states and 82 parliamentary seats - 30 seats away from forming the government. The ruling Barisan Nasional picked up 140 seats.

Anwar previously claimed that the party has enough MPs to topple the government on Monday as he celebrated the end of his ban from politics with a rally in Kampung Baru.

"We are saying here for the first time that we are ready (to rule the country) but we will only enter when the majority is comfortable," he told reporters after delivering his speech to 20,000 supporters.

However, Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said two days ago that there is no indication of any BN elected representatives wanting to cross over.

Jeffrey Kitingan project ic 250107 jeffery kitinganHe also refuted claims that BN fears a crisis in being toppled at any time but said the party will monitor the situation.

According to Kitingan, the special rights of the Borneo states have been slowly eroded for the past 40 years under the Umno-BN rule.

"The 20 points which list out the conditions for Sabah before agreeing to be a partner to form the Federation were later ignored along with other assurances and promises given by (first prime minister) Tunku Abdul Rahman and by the successive BN governments.

"The Umno-led federal government has always called the shots (and) Sabahans had no real choice but to accept and accommodate whatever Umno or BN say," he said.

The former Bingkor state assemblyperson proceeds to criticise Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and BN for being unable to offer anything substantial to Sabahans aside from a few ministerial positions.

Kitingan then compared that to what PKR did in accepting and approving the 'The Tambunan Declaration' which later became part of the party's election manifesto which is being offered to Sabah in exchange for Sabah MPs' support.

Partners under PKR

The declaration promises packages including more autonomy, 20 per cent oil royalty, a second deputy premiership for Sabah and Sarawak, six to seven cabinet Ministers, the return of Labuan, more ambassadorial posts ranging 15 each for Sabah and Sarawak and the scrapping of State Federal Development Department (JPPS).

Kitingan opines that these offers are significant and are able to fulfill the aspirations of Sabahans under Anwar's leadership.

"The rate of commitment is also very high as these are in the party's manifesto. Can Anwar deliver? Records show that Anwar is one who can deliver," he asserted.

Kitingan then calls on Sabahans to choose from regaining their special rights and dignity as partners under PKR over being subservient under the Umno-BN rule.

"This is the time to write history by choosing to install a more open minded federal government after 50 years and a chance to complete the work and aspirations of our founding fathers.

"Indeed, this is our duty, our responsibility to do what is good for Sabah and Malaysia. I urge MPs not to waste anymore time. Do it for Sabah and for yourself. Do it now," he pleaded.