Dr M's game plan: How Umno MPs can oust PM
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About 35 Umno members of parliament alone could have ousted Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, according to ex-premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.
MCPX

This is Mahathir's game plan - that these Umno MPs become independents instead of defecting to the opposition to ensure that the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition will retain power.

In a de facto masterplan for toppling Abdullah without losing government, Mahathir said becoming independent lawmakers meant they could avoid opposition figurehead Anwar Ibrahim having a shot at the job.

mahathir and abdullah badawi pak lah and umno"Say 35 of them come out (of Umno), the government will collapse, the prime minister will have to resign and if Anwar tries to become the PM you don't give your votes to him," Mahathir said on Saturday at a forum organised by his supporters in Petaling Jaya.

"If say Najib, if he has the guts, decides to step in and be the candidate for prime ministership, you can then give your 35 votes to him and he becomes the PM, no loss to anyone, except to Abdullah."

Abdullah has come under intense pressure to step down since a humiliating setback for the Umno-led coalition in March 8 general elections.

Abdullah, however, insists he still has a mandate and will only discuss a transition of power to his deputy Najib Razak after party polls in December.

Defections a pipe dream

A three-party opposition alliance, unofficially led by Anwar, has seized control of five states and a third of parliamentary seats.
Anwar has said time and again he is confident of attracting enough defecting government lawmakers to topple Abdullah's administration, but Mahathir brushed aside that claim.

"I think it's a pipe dream," he said.

"He has the money but he is not likely to get the support for crossing over. Crossing over is very painful."

But for Mahathir's plan to work, at least half of the existing 78 Umno MPs in Parliament would have to become independent candidates.

Given that most Umno MPs are personally picked by Abdullah, the Mahathir plan too could be considered a pipe dream.

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