

**No-confidence call a serious blow to Pak Lah**  
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The call by Sabah Progressive Party (Sapp) for a vote of no confidence against the prime minister has delivered a serious blow to the embattled Barisan Nasional government.  
MCPX

sapp sabah pc 180608 Analysts said the unprecedented move compounded Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's problems after disastrous March elections, and that it could trigger a ripple effect of dissent within the 14-party coalition.

"We have lost confidence in the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi," Sapp president Yong Teck Lee told a press conference.

Yong said the party, which has two lawmakers in parliament, would decide on Friday whether to quit the BN coalition, and demanded major concessions from the government.

sapp sabah pc 180608 01 He left open the prospect of joining the opposition alliance led by former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim, who has ambitions of forming a new administration with the help of defecting government lawmakers.

"Whoever would agree with our issues here, we will work with (them), inside and outside of Sabah," he said.

Yong attacked the coalition's record in the impoverished state, saying it had been subject to unfair laws and excessive taxes.

"That is why we need an immediate declaration of no confidence in the PM and the government, to tell the BN government that we can no longer tolerate their insensitive attitude towards the Sabah issues that are real and serious."

### **Fighting for political survival**

Abdullah has been fighting for his political survival since the March elections that saw the opposition gain unprecedented ground, winning a third of parliamentary seats and control of five states.

abdullah ahmad badawi and sapp sabah A recent 41 percent petrol price hike, which has triggered widespread outrage and public protests, has made Abdullah's position even more tenuous.

Yong listed demands including the diversion of energy revenues coming from the resource-rich state.

"With our political move today, Sapp hereby initiates the political process to claim 20 percent in oil royalties, which is after all the natural resources of Sabah," he said.

"We must make a stand before the window of opportunity closes," he said, raising the prospect of a no-confidence vote when the parliament opens on Monday, but adding it was not decided if his party or another would table the motion.

### **Tipping point?**

Sapp is a minor member of the coalition. But analysts said its decision could be the tipping point for the government, which now relies on support from lawmakers in Sabah and Sarawak.

cpps bar council roundtable 030407 tricia yeoh "This will have a ripple effect. Public perception, both nationally and internationally, will be affected because the prime minister will be perceived as a weak leader," said Tricia Yeoh (right) from the Centre for Public Policy Studies.

"This might provoke other lawmakers, who are equally dissatisfied with Abdullah, even those internally from the Umno party itself, to act," she said, referring to the party which heads the coalition.

The premier has refused to step down after the coalition's worst ever election results, but he faces a major hurdle at Umno internal leadership polls in December, when dissatisfaction could bubble over.

### **Historic move**

muhammad mohd taib mat taib Umno's information chief Muhammad Muhammad Taib shrugged off Sapp's move and said he did not expect other coalition parties to follow.

"Although there are many who are dissatisfied, we will pull through," he told AFP.

Anwar's PKR has said it was reluctant to mount a no-confidence vote for fear of appearing arrogant. But it said the latest events were proof that the coalition's internal crisis was worsening.

"Monday's parliament session will definitely be fiery. If a motion is moved against Abdullah, it will be historic. Never has a Malaysian prime minister faced a no-confidence vote," said party information chief Tian Chua, who is MP for Batu.