

Umno leadership has lost all credibility: Ku Li
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A push from within ruling coalition Barisan Nasional for an unprecedented MCPX

no-confidence vote against the premier shows the leadership has lost all credibility, a senior ruling party figure said.

The Sabah Progressive Party (Sapp) made the call yesterday in a serious blow to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who has faced calls to quit since disastrous March general election.

Analysts said the move for a vote of no-confidence vote when Parliament opens on Monday could trigger a ripple effect of dissent within the 14-party BN coalition.

tengku razaleigh forum 260408 ku li speaking Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, a 71-year-old former finance minister who made a failed challenge against Abdullah in 2004, said the Sabah party's move showed the extent of the crisis in the ruling party Umno.

"The top leadership of BN and of Umno has lost all credibility, and our component parties are rethinking their relationship with us. This should come as no surprise except to those who have been living in complete denial," he said in a statement late Wednesday.

"In its management of the economy this leadership has lacked vision and shown a disturbing inability to plan and execute," he said, criticising a recent fuel price hike that has triggered public protests.

Razaleigh said that instead of listening, the leadership was silencing calls for reform and suppressing democratic processes within the ruling party.

"If our leaders refuse to face reality, I fear the worst for the party and this government," said the political veteran, a member of Malaysia's royalty who has again offered himself as an alternative leader.

Anwar making his move

The Sabah Progressive Party, which has two members in Parliament, said it would decide on Friday whether to quit the coalition. It left open the prospect of joining the opposition alliance led by former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar has ambitions of forming a new administration with the help of defecting government lawmakers. After the March polls that gave the opposition a third of parliamentary seats, just 30 lawmakers are needed to switch sides.

anwar ibrahim pc 120508 01Anwar congratulated Sapp's "bravery" and backed a call from its president Yong Teck Lee for 20 percent of the oil revenues from resource-rich Sabah to be retained by the impoverished state.

"I am happy with these early actions and call upon other friends to act quickly in order to guarantee stable politics and efficient economic management," he said in a statement.

Abdullah made a brief response to Sapp's move, saying Yong was motivated by personal gain.

"I have not been able to satisfy his personal greed," he said, according to the official Bernama news agency. His aides said he would elaborate at a later date.

Umno figures said a vote against the prime minister would not "see the light of day" because of parliamentary rules that make it easy for the ruling party to block the motion.

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