

**Sapp duo no show in Parliament**  
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**Beh Lih Yi**

Sabah Progressive Party's (Sapp) attempt to MCPX move a motion of no confidence against Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi did not take place today as both Sapp MPs were missing in action from Parliament.

The duo - Sepanggar's Eric Enchin Majimbun and Tawau's Chua Soon Bui - left their seats unfilled all day in the House and they could not be located anywhere in Parliament.

All eyes have been on the two MPs after Sapp - a component party of the ruling Barisan Nasional - dropped a bombshell last Wednesday, declaring that the party will move an unprecedented motion against the prime minister in Parliament once it reconvened.

The move by Sapp was prompted by grouses over a string of unsettled and long-standing issues concerning Sabah, with special emphasis on illegal immigrants in the state.

Despite being foretold that their party's motion was unlikely to see the light of day due to parliamentary rules, the two MPs were expected to be present when the Dewan Rakyat resumes today after a three-week break.

Their absence was more conspicuous since the BN chief whip and Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had issued a directive to all its 140 MPs to show up and support a government motion to support the price hikes today.

Both Abdullah and Najib were present as well as other key BN Sabah figures such as Upko president Bernard Dompok, Parti Bersatu Sabah president Joseph Pairin Kitingan and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah president Joseph Kurup.

### **Calm before the storm**

When met in the lobby, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz confirmed that the two Sapp MPs were among four BN MPs absent.

The other two were Federal Territories Minister Zulhasnan Rafique and Mambong MP James Dawos Mamit, both on medical leaves.

Nazri, who is in charge of parliamentary affairs, reiterated that any BN MPs' attempt to move a motion of no-confidence against the prime minister will not see the light of day.

"We can take action against them, sack them or warn them... There is a whip system which has been practised for more than 50 years," said the minister.

BN Backbenchers Club head Tiong King Sing however said that Majimbun was present during a brief BN MPs' pre-council meeting this morning held at the Parliament House.

Deputy Speaker Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar, when asked by reporters, confirmed that the Speaker's office has yet to receive any notice from any MP to file a no-confidence motion.

A two-day notice is required for any MP to move an emergency motion while two weeks' notice is required for an ordinary motion.

Surprisingly opposition MPs did not raise the matter, and the day's proceeding went without any interruption.

"This is a rather unusual calm - a calm before the storm," an aide to a senior BN Sabah politician pointed out when met at the lobby.

### **Confidence or no-confidence vote?**

Saifuddin Nasution (PKR-Machang) however postulated that "something is cooking" as he pointed out that the motion could be tabled anytime during the present session which ends on July 15.

"On our part, we do have a plan but whether we want to execute it during this session or the next session, we will have to monitor the situation first," he said.

saifuddin nasution Asked to elaborate on PKR's plan, Saifuddin - a key figure behind the party's efforts to get BN MPs to defect - said it included the tabling of a no-confidence motion against Abdullah.

The Machang MP disagreed with seasoned politician Lim Kit Siang's (DAP-Ipoh Timor) rationale that the government's price hikes motion today could be turned into a no-confidence vote if it failed to pass.

"The purpose of the government to put up a motion on price hikes now is to gauge the sentiment not only about Pakatan Rakyat's MPs but also their own MPs, especially the potential hoppers.

"They may already have the names of these MPs (potential hoppers), so they want to see how they are going to vote or will abstain from voting," said the Machang MP.

Liew Chin Tong (DAP-Bukit Bendera) however sided with Lim and agreed that any defeat in this session will be tantamount to a no-confidence verdict of the government of Abdullah Badawi.

"In Westminster-styled Parliament, every bill or motion is equivalent to a motion of confidence on the government's policy. So if any of these is defeated from now on, it will spell the end of the government," said Liew.

khairy jamaluddin parliament pc 230608 02Khairy Jamaluddin (BN-Rembau) however disagreed, saying the price-hike motion could not be interpreted from a political angle as it concerned the country's economy.

"This is a serious motion which involves the discussion on the restructuring of the fuel subsidy. It can't be read from a political angle or being turned into a motion to replace the motion initially said to be moved by Sapp," the Umno Youth deputy chief said at Parliament lobby.

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