

**Palanivel: Umno must talk to its 'BN brothers'**  
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The Umno top leadership should begin both formal and informal talks with component parties in the Barisan Nasional (BN), said MIC deputy president G Palanivel.  
MCPX

mic and palanivelIn a press statement yesterday, he said this should be an on-going process.

"Umno which is the 'big brother' in BN can achieve more by having continuous dialogue with its other 'brothers' in the coalition on various issues that have a bearing on national unity as well as other national policies," he added.

Palanivel was commenting on Minister in Prime Minister's Department Nazri Abdul Aziz's statement Saturday that Umno should stop wasting its time in trying to talk to PAS.

The MIC leader said BN component parties, which were not pre-informed of the talks, and the nation "watched with a mixture of apprehension and optimism Umno's move in holding talks with PAS."

**'Uncertain verdict'**

Palanivel said even though it has been more than four months since the general election, the nation has been on a continuous election mode.

"We can understand that various factors have been keeping our national leaders very busy but it is time for them to give more thorough attention to the state of affairs in the component parties and to understand their view points as well

"Many perceived that the March 8 general election has given the nation some sort of an 'uncertain verdict' giving rise to speculation about by elections and snap general elections," he added.

In view of this, Palanivel said there is a need to stabilise the situation with confidence building measures, and one such measure should be to have talks with individual component parties regularly and at various levels.

Following the polls, which witnessed a major political setback for the ruling coalition, Umno and PAS held secret talks, which among others, discussed the possibility of power sharing.

Meanwhile, the MIC deputy president also welcomed Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's statement on moves to increase non-Malays in the civil service.

He said the prime minister should also look at increasing the participation and role of non-Malays in decision making positions in the other areas such as universities, GLCs, statutory bodies, banks and media industries.