

Anwar slammed over 'back door' bid for Putrajaya
Malaysiakini.com
Aug 8, 2008

A former close associate of Anwar Ibrahim has criticised the opposition stalwart's attempt to become prime minister through the 'back door' by instigating massive crossovers.
MCPX

Political scientist Dr Chandra Muzaffar, who was also the former PKR deputy president, described this as unethical and undemocratic.

lebanon forum 050906 chandra mad"A cabinet established through such an avenue will lack moral credibility. Parliament itself will be tarnished.

"Both the executive and the legislature - two vital arms of governance - will be perceived by the people as institutions that are bereft of integrity," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

Chandra said acquiring power through the back door would demean and denigrate politics and added that Anwar had no mandate to oust the democratically-elected government of the day.

The academic also accused the PKR de facto leader as being consumed by a single-minded obsession to become the country's prime minister in the shortest possible time.

This, he added, is the driving force behind his effort to persuade at least 30 Barisan Nasional MPs to switch camps immediately.

percentage of seats in parliament 300408"The size and scale of the crossover he envisages is mind-boggling. Has there ever been an instance anywhere in the world where a government which has 58 seats more than the combined opposition is under the constant threat of imminent collapse simply because an individual - who is not even in Parliament - boasts continuously that a certain number of MPs are going to switch sides by a certain date?" he asked.

Anwar has declared his intention to contest in the Aug 26 by-election for the Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat which could pave the way for his return to Parliament after a 10-year hiatus.

The opposition leader's political career came to a grinding halt in 1998 when he was sacked as deputy premier and Umno deputy president.

However, after the March 8 polls, Anwar once again stamped his mark as a relevant political force in the country and public expressed his intention to become prime minister.

Have respect for the voters

Meanwhile, Chandra said it was this incessant drive to topple the government through crossovers that had created so much uncertainty in the country in the last few months.

"If the threat of crossovers hangs like a Sword of Damocles over the nation's head, it is partly because many Malaysians know that Anwar as a BN and federal government leader at one time had played a pivotal role in the overthrow of the democratically elected PBS state government

in Sabah in 1994," he said.

anwar ibrahim pc 080808 02Chandra stressed that although Anwar had stated that his enticement did not involve money or other allurements, it would still be morally wrong for a legislator to cross over since it would be a betrayal of the voters trust.

"In a democracy, a legislator elected on a particular platform should return his mandate to the people and resign his seat before he switches sides. That is what respect for the dignity of the voter means," he said.

Chandra also said it was a pity that such 'despicable politics' has been condoned by so-called principled politicians and committed human rights activists around Anwar.

"They should have tried to convince him that it is more honourable to enter Putrajaya through the front door. This implies winning the 13th general election at the federal level and forming the government through legitimate, ethical means," he said.

Chandra said if Anwar was to enter Parliament after the Permatang Pauh by-election, he should try to bridge the gap that separated the Pakatan Rakyat parties and provide them with a unifying vision and programme of reform that would go beyond cliches and platitudes.

"One hopes that he will also, as opposition leader, establish a shadow cabinet that cajoles and coaxes the BN government to introduce much needed changes.

"This is what the people would want him to do. Anwar has no mandate to oust the democratically elected government of the day through the back door," he said.

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