

Anwar seeks emergency House session
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim today said he has sent a letter to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi asking him to convene an emergency session of Parliament to debate a motion of no confidence.

"I have made a formal request to call for an emergency session in Parliament to deliberate a motion of censure against the leadership of Abdullah no later than Sept 23."

Speaking at a press conference this afternoon, the Pakatan Rakyat supremo wanted the Parliament to be recalled not later than next Tuesday under the section 11(3) of the parliamentary rules. (see box)

"The standing orders are quite clear. The PM has the authority to convene an emergency session. All he needs to do is inform the speaker.

"We have given the date for the emergency session. It makes no sense for an emergency session to be held next year. We expect the prime minister to respond."

Pakatan to decide on next move if...

The opposition leader said that should the prime minister refuses to recall Parliament, Pakatan will have an emergency meeting to discuss its next course of action.

anwar ibrahim pc call for emergency parliament meeting 180908 01Anwar also said that there was no reason why he should be arrested under the draconian Internal Security Act, which allows detention without trial.

"What we want is that MPs, including Teresa Kok, be given the right to attend Parliament on Tuesday," he said, referring to the opposition MP who was detained under ISA last Friday.

"Politically, economically we are in a crisis, we can't delay (the takeover). Even for the Pakatan (to rule), it is going to be tough under the current economic situation."

He accused Abdullah of being in a state of denial.

"If he wants to see the details (of the list), then convene an emergency session of parliament and he will see...," he said.

"If he doesn't believe me, then go to Parliament."

Too volatile to wait

Anwar reiterated that he has enough defectors to take power, but claimed that they had asked to remain anonymous for now to avoid being harassed.

anwar ibrahim pc call for emergency parliament meeting 180908 03Asked if the protracted

delay in naming the defectors would affect his public image, Anwar said that it was unlikely the case.

"I said we have the list, and will share with the PM. Failing which, we would go to Parliament. What else do you want me to do? You want me to name the list now and let them get harassed?"

"You know the system, and then you tell me that we should get guards to protect them? They appealed to me: Do not announce the list until we appear together. That's what they said," he said.

He stressed that alleged defectors wanted a guarantee of their safety before being made public.

anwar ibrahim pc call for emergency parliament meeting 180908 02 Asked why he could not wait until Oct 13 when Parliament is set to reconvene, Anwar said that the political and economic situation in the country was too volatile to wait.

"How long can you wait? What are the new visions and economic plans for this period? Any responsible government should at least have a task force to deal with the economic crisis.

"They don't have any. (But) we will deal with this immediately. Tomorrow if possible," he said.

Next stop, the Istana?

The press conference was also attended by PAS secretary-general Kamaruddin Jaaffar and DAP central executive committee member Anthony Loke.

Anwar needs the support of 30 government lawmakers to take control of the 222-seat parliament.

He stepped up the pressure on Abdullah a day after the small BN party in Sabah - which has two MPs - quit the ruling coalition, and the prime minister indicated he may step down earlier than planned.

Anwar said that if Abdullah fails to convene the emergency session, he may meet the King Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin to stake his claim to government.

"I am not discounting the possibility," he said.