

Opposition leader denies talks with Pak Lah
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Pakatan Rakyat leaders are making contradicting statements regarding the much-touted plan by the opposition alliance to seize control of the federal government from Barisan Nasional.

Yesterday, PKR information chief Tian Chua claimed that several meetings were held between the rival camps since the weekend to discuss the transition of power.

According to him, the talks involved a 'middleperson' for Pakatan Rakyat and a 'middleperson' for Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

While Abdullah had denied this, Pakatan Rakyat supremo Anwar Ibrahim also appeared to be in the dark about the negotiations.

"I'm not aware of any negotiations taking place between Pakatan Rakyat and the prime minister - statements made yesterday suggesting that a line of communication was open were misinformed," said the opposition leader in a statement.

Asked on the same issue later, Anwar added: "No, not that I'm aware of... he (Tian) may be privy to other information but as far as I'm concerned what the PM said was right.

"Very rarely do I agree with Abdullah Badawi."

Previously, Anwar said that Pakatan Rakyat would take control of the government on Sept 16 but this failed to materialise.

He then called on Abdullah to hold an emergency parliament session yesterday regarding the takeover but the latter refused.

The opposition stalwart claims that he has more than 30 Barisan Nasional MPs who are willing to defect in order for Pakatan Rakyat to form government.

However, his rivals have dismissed this as nothing more than a political gimmick.

Meeting with Pakatan leaders

Meanwhile, Anwar also revealed that he met with the Pakatan Rakyat leadership from PAS in Kota Bharu and DAP in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

He said Kelantan Menteri Besar and PAS spiritual leader Nik Aziz Nik Mat and PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang had reaffirmed their commitment to the spirit and goals of the alliance.

He added that Penang Chief Minister and DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng also expressed satisfaction with the progress made to strengthen and broaden the consensus among Pakatan Rakyat parties and supporters from BN.

"We also discussed the next steps that Pakatan Rakyat should take towards forming a

government that reflects the support of the majority of members of Parliament.

"Abdullah's failure to accede to our request for an emergency session of Parliament represents another attempt by the Umno-led BN government to sabotage and scuttle the democratic process," he said.

"Nevertheless I along with my colleagues in Pakatan remain confident that the people's desire for change shall soon be attained. We will proceed cautiously towards our goals and we agreed neither to be provoked into hasty action nor to take an irresponsible approach that would lead to instability and greater uncertainty in country," he added.

No basis to Umno's rumours

Elaborating on the meeting with the PAS heavyweights after his court hearing this morning, Anwar said: "We have reaffirmed our earlier stance and decision that there is no question as to the rumours circulated by Umno inciting fear among the Malays and Muslims suggesting that this (Pakatan) government would be Chinese dominated or non-Malays dominated."

On his meeting with Lim, he said: "May I stress this point that in Penang it has been all along Chinese dominated but I have great confidence in the CM's ability to defend the justice and development that is fair to all so the issue does not arise."

"But I want reassure the Malay community that there is no basis to this machinations of Umno and that we will remain steadfast in our position respecting the constitutional provisions including the Malay language, Islam as the religion of the federation, respecting other religions and bumiputera privileges while not denying the rights of other parties – this are the issues that wereresolved by all parties."

In his statement, Anwar also said there is a crisis of confidence in the current leadership of the nation at a time when Malaysians are demanding solutions for the highest increases in prices in two decades, increasing joblessness and the dramatic decline in investor confidence.

"While the newly appointed Finance Minister (Najib Abdul Razak) boasts that the country is in sound economic standing, the facts tell a different story.

"In 2008 already over RM125 billion has been withdrawn from the country by investors weary of a government that has failed to implement a single reform to ensure judicial independence and that continues to use draconian laws such as the ISA to detain its citizens without due process of law," he added.