

Pakatan supremo urges patience in bid to remove government
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim today defended his failure to topple the government a week after claiming he had enough support to seize power, and asked Malaysians to be patient.

Anwar said removing the ruling coalition which has dominated Malaysian politics for half a century was an enormous task and that he wanted to do it smoothly and within the law.

"I appeal to Malaysian citizens, particularly those who want to see a change, to understand this and be a bit more patient because we do not want to transgress the constitution, rules and procedures," he told a press conference.

"It will take a lot of patience, a lot of resolve, to try and unravel this complex web controlled by a few cronies," he said.

Anwar said last week he had the support of more than 31 lawmakers from the Barisan Nasional coalition and called on Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to agree to negotiations on a handover of power.

Abdullah refused and rejected a request for an emergency session of parliament for the opposition to mount a vote of no confidence against him.

PKR information chief Tian Chua said yesterday the opposition had begun handover talks with the government, with several meetings between intermediaries taking place since the weekend.

Abdullah said there were no such talks and Anwar said Wednesday he was "not aware" of any discussion on a political transition.

But he said he had written to the king to inform him of his actions so far, although he was not yet seeking an audience with the monarch, who would need to approve any change in government.

'If they think I'm a liar, put it to test'

Anwar dismissed the premier's claims that he was merely bluffing about the defectors, whose names he has refused to release.

"If they think I'm a liar, put it to the test and have a vote taken," he said.

Parliament resumes on Oct 13 after a break for the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan but even then the opposition faces procedural barriers to mounting a no-confidence vote.

Anwar faces a trial on sodomy allegations - the same charge that saw the former deputy premier sacked and jailed a decade ago.

On Wednesday, his lawyers argued against an application to move the case to the High Court.

"The prosecution is trying very hard to transfer the case to the High Court so it will be heard by a judge decided by them," Anwar said after a hearing at the Sessions Court which reserved its judgement to Oct 7.

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