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# Dr M opening door for Anwar

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## BN lawmakers reject former prime minister's call to quit the coalition

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Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad

TUN Dr Mahathir Mohamad's obsession with toppling Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's administration is opening the door of opportunity to the opposition led by his arch-rival Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Dr Mahathir's naked call for defiance and rebellion against Abdullah has emboldened the opposition, which is now openly wooing the very Barisan Nasional MPs being encouraged by the former premier to quit the coalition.

But the BN lawmakers are rebuffing Dr Mahathir's call, most of them saying this would only pave the way for the Opposition to gain control.

Ironically, Dr Mahathir seems to be playing into the hands of Anwar, his former deputy whom he sacked,

and whom was subsequently jailed, in 1998.

"I do intend to topple the government, we have the numbers," Anwar said in Singapore yesterday.

"I'm looking forward to early elections, hopefully before September.

"We will move the moment we are sure we can contest and a vote of no-confidence against the PM in Parliament is our best option."

Dr Mahathir yesterday urged BN MPs to quit the coalition, become independents and force the collapse of the government.

"The new government can only be set up if agreed to by all BN MPs who have left the coalition because they have the power to decide whether BN or Pakatan (Rakyat) can be the majority in Parliament.

If BN replaces Datuk Seri Abdullah with someone brave, the group which has left BN can then support the BN and the BN can form the government again," he argued in a posting on his blog.

But Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad said: "Answering Dr Mahathir's call will only result in the opposition forming the next government. I find it all very strange.

"By becoming independents, MPs would be betraying the people who voted them into Parliament on a BN ticket.

"This is about running the country and respecting the mandate given to BN to govern..."



Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

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