

THE STAR

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'Umno does not want Anwar'

We have enough leaders in the party, says Abdullah

PENANG: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim tried to make a comeback into Umno but the party does not want him, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

The Prime Minister, who made this revelation last night, said the de facto PKR leader was not important as "we have enough leaders in Umno".

"Furthermore, he fought against the party. We do not have to wait for him to come back. Now, he's looking for new friends and had gotten into a marriage of convenience.

"He is now working with others but in the end, all of this is only for his own benefit," he said at the *Malam Satu Hati Bersama Rakyat* in Rifle Range here last night.

Abdullah also hit out at DAP, pointing out that its secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, who is contesting the Bagan parliamentary seat, "ran away" from Malacca to Penang.

"Do you think Penang people are stupid to support him? We Penangites are not stupid," he told a large crowd.

Abdullah also chided the Opposition for making an issue of the scrapping of the indelible ink an issue.

He said Barisan too wanted credible elections so that its victory would be credible.



"I want credible elections more than anyone else. This I will leave it to the Election Commission," he said.

Among the speakers were MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, Gerakan acting president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and former Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik.

The Barisan chairman also expressed confidence that the coalition would get enough majority to form government again.

"The opposition thinks that we are going to lose the elections and that's why we are not going to use the ink.

"It has nothing to do with us losing. I know for a fact that *Insyallah* (God willing) we will get enough majority," he said.



United stand: Barisan Nasional leaders waving to the crowd. They are (from left) Tanjung Bunga candidate Chia Loong Thye, Kebun Bunga candidate Quah Kooi Heong, Air Putih candidate Tan Yok Cheng, Dr Lim (partly hidden), Ong, Abdullah and Dr Koh.

Abdullah, however, noted:

"I don't know what is in your heart. But I can assure you that Barisan would do the best for you and the country," he said.

He added that Barisan wanted to distribute the nation's wealth equitably to all races.

On the Hindu Rights Action Force issue, he said the group was telling Indians to not vote for Umno candidates as the victory would make the party stronger.

This, he said, could anger the Malays who in turn would not support MIC candidates. Then, MIC will

have to *lingkup* (fold up). This is bad as MIC is an old friend," he said.

Abdullah said Barisan would be weak if it did not receive good support from Penangites.

"But if you are with us, we will be strong for you, Penang and Malaysia," he added.