

PM very likely to step down

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Minister: Muhyiddin to make an announcement after audience with the King

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin will appear before the Yang di-Pertuan Agong tomorrow, with all indication pointing towards a decision to step down from his post.

Top Cabinet sources said the Prime Minister had already informed Perikatan Nasional government leaders and officials of his intention at a meeting here yesterday afternoon.

A senior Cabinet minister said an official announcement would be made after the Prime Minister's audience with His Majesty at Istana Negara.

He said Muhyiddin had remained steadfast in his stand to quit, as he felt there were no other options since he no longer commands the support of the majority of the Members of Parliament.

His position has also become untenable following the immediate rejection of his reform offers by the Opposition.

The promised reforms included equal funding for all MPs, the PM's two-term limit, anti-hopping laws, more parliamentary committees

with 50% Opposition chairmanship and the implementation of Undi 18.

As news of his decision to resign began to trickle out, Perikatan and Barisan Nasional leaders were huddled in meetings late into the night with many not answering calls or briefly saying they were stuck in meetings.

It is understood that discussions on who could succeed Muhyiddin included the possibility of Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob taking over, but it would depend on whether Umno and Bersatu can work out an agreement.

"There are moves to keep the Perikatan government intact following Muhyiddin's decision to resign from his post. But whether the Perikatan government remains will depend on whether the two parties can agree to form a majority," a Putrajaya source said.

Another Perikatan source described Umno as the kingmaker now with Gabungan Parti Sarawak, the Sarawak-based alliance, as the other kingmaker.

If Umno and Bersatu come to an agreement, with a proposed name,



Royal meeting: Muhyiddin will appear before the Yang di-Pertuan Agong tomorrow. — Bernama

it will then need the endorsement from PAS, MCA, MIC, GPS, PBS, STAR and independents.

"If that happens, then they would present the King with a name but if

they cannot, then there is no way of salvaging the government. That means the entire Cabinet also has to resign," a source said, adding that the consequence will be great.

He said there would also be ramifications at the state government level as both parties had worked together, and it would have a bearing on their decision.

Pakatan Harapan, comprising PKR, DAP and Amanah, has already announced their endorsement of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as the prime minister.

It also called on lawmakers to back Anwar as the prime minister to avoid snap polls amid the Covid-19 pandemic while Umno veteran MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah has offered himself to be an interim prime minister.

Earlier yesterday, Muhyiddin had been having endless meetings with ministers and leaders from the government parties.

The meetings yesterday began at his private residence in Bukit Damansara, a day after the opposition announced that even though the offers were highly desired, they would not support Muhyiddin.

A source said Muhyiddin first

met with his deputy and senior ministers before meeting other leaders from the Perikatan government parties.

"In the morning, he met with Ismail Sabri and Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein.

"Then there was a meeting with PAS ministers and leaders, including Datuk Takiyuddin Hassan and Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man," said the source.

Other senior ministers were also present throughout, the source added.

According to this source, Muhyiddin also held a meeting with the Bersatu political bureau.

"MCA and MIC met the Prime Minister later and then there were other ministers from other parties who came to see him," said the source.

Some of the leaders who met him said on condition of anonymity that Muhyiddin did express his willingness to resign as it was apparent that he had no majority to stay on.

"We, however, need to find our options as to his replacement should he decide to do that," said a top party leader.