

# Dec 19 confidence vote

Anwar exudes confidence of  
a favourable outcome

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**M**ONDAY'S vote of confidence is already lurid with juicy trailers of intrigue, powerplay, tactical nous, anxiety and tribalism. The take? It's not exactly a breeze for Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who volunteered the confidence vote. Ask Anwar. He exudes the confidence of a favourable outcome even if the pact's backdrop is protean disaffection. Ask the still sulking Perikatan Nasional. After the royal rebuff, they wreaked vengeance of anarchic denialism and harangues against Anwar, who retaliated by suing PN, mostly Pas, leaders for defamation. Ask Pakatan Harapan's collaborators. Suddenly, the imagined consensus stutters over policy differences. Anwar's bet-the-farm vote slogs to seize three major imperatives: categorically debunk Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's dibs that PN cornered the Dewan Rakyat market for MP numbers since the Sheraton coup; establish a firmer administration that genuinely works the national reset, notwithstanding his "wild bunch" of disputable cabinet picks; and, demonstrate that his work-in-progress policies compute with the electorate's insane expectations.

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As serpentine as it looks, Anwar's altercation with PN MPs is, in his mind at least, "containable". But in handling his PH colleagues, DAP in particular, Anwar jigs to a conventional rhythm. He yearns for the waltz, while his partners hanker for hip-hop. Take Gobind Singh Deo, the DAP MP for Damansara. He demurred on the home minister's standpoint that the government won't review the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012

(Sosma), alluding that the law "allows the court process to take place". Understandably, Gobind is miffed at how brusque the administration he affirms downplayed a sacrosanct PH position to downsize Sosma's draconian concussion. For Anwar, how this dynamic steers zealous PH backbenchers, committed to executing their electoral manifesto to the letter, is complicated. Wildcat backbenchers will undoubtedly rally for Anwar (the alternative is political purgatory), but the PM will have to respond to a full-blooded critique of dangling partisan issues, as if the mob still huddles in opposition trenches.

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