

Confidence vote a 'sign of leadership'

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MPs laud Anwar, say motion will strengthen political stability

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PETALING JAYA: The confidence vote that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is set to face in Parliament will strengthen political stability and put unnecessary "politicking" to rest, say lawmakers.

MPs from Pakatan Harapan, Barisan Nasional and other allies of the unity government have pledged to vote in support of Anwar when he faces the vote of confidence in the Dewan Rakyat next week.

They also lauded the premier for the effort to put the legitimacy of his government to the test despite having no compulsion to do so.

Perikatan Nasional, on the other hand, will follow the decision of its leadership.

Pakatan's Bayan Baru MP Sim Tze Tzin said that in past general elections, the issue of legitimacy did not arise as the government had a clear majority of 112.

However, after the 15th General

Election, there was a hung parliament for the first time in Malaysian history and a "contest of legitimacy" by the Opposition.

"So credit must be given to Anwar for having the courage and conviction to put his government to the test through a confidence vote," he said when contacted.

"This is a clear sign of leadership and courage," he said.

He noted that when the previous government was changed in mid-term, Perikatan Nasional chief and former prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin did not hold a motion of confidence and had suspended Parliament meetings.

Sim said the vote of confidence would put all possible "politicking" by the Opposition to rest.

"I think it is a smart strategy as long as it stabilises the government," he said, adding that Malaysians wanted a stable government that would last the five years.

Petaling Jaya MP Lee Chean Chung said the Dewan Rakyat was the best avenue to determine support.

"It will help restore confidence of the people and the business community.

"I salute the courage and wisdom of this decision," he said.

He noted that not many prime ministers had tested the legitimacy of their governments in the House except Tun Hussein Onn who went through a vote of confidence during an emergency parliamentary sitting in 1976, merely days after taking over the mantle following the death of his predecessor Tun Abdul Razak.

Meanwhile, Johor Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Hasni Mohammad said Barisan's support for Anwar's unity government was intact.

"It is only sensible that we should all support the current government. As for the talk saying that there might be a difference of opinion within Barisan ... I think that is not true," he said.

"If there are any issues and misunderstanding arising within Barisan, it is all within Umno itself and

the component parties (in Barisan).

"It is not about Barisan with the government," he added.

Hasni said that while it was not necessary for Anwar to take the route (confidence vote), the Pakatan chief wants to make it clear that his government is legitimate and has majority support.

"He chose that approach and I think we should respect his decision. As the MP for Simpang Renggam, I will definitely support the government of the day," he added.

Barisan's Titiwangsa MP Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani said the Prime Minister would receive resounding support from the MPs supporting the unity government.

"As it is, he already has more than 140 MPs to support him.

"There are 82 from Pakatan, 30 from Barisan, 23 from GPS, six from GRS and three Warisan MPs. That is what I think," he said.

"Even if 20 MPs abstain, he still gets enough votes to get through this vote of confidence," he added.

Barisan chairman Datuk Seri Dr

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi had said last month that the coalition would fully support Anwar in the confidence vote in Parliament on Dec 19.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Deputy Prime Minister and Umno president, urged Malaysians to stop speculating on the prime ministership and accept the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's decision on the unity government.

Meanwhile, Parti Bangsa Malaysia's Julau MP Datuk Larry Sng said the vote of confidence was a good move.

"Passing a vote of confidence on the prime minister would put to rest the legitimacy of his premier-ship and give reassurance to the markets," he said.

From the Opposition front, Hulu Terengganu MP Datuk Rosol Wahid said that the 31 Bersatu MPs will follow the decision made by the top Perikatan leadership.

"We will follow what is decided by our top leadership. We shall wait and see in Parliament on Dec 19," he added.