

Pakatan will continue working with Umno, says Anwar

PUTRAJAYA: Asserting his good relations with the Umno leadership, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has brushed off suggestions that Pakatan Harapan "write off" its partnership with the party.

Anwar, who is Pakatan chairman, said he did not subscribe to acts of betrayal and that the working relations with Umno would continue.

"I do not need to think of another strategy. My stand is that I am loyal to our relations with Umno.

"I trust the Umno leadership and they have been very supportive (of me) and I have also been supportive of them. Our working relations are extremely good," he said during a dialogue with chief editors and senior editors of the print, electronic and online media at Seri Perdana yesterday.

Anwar was asked if his coalition remains in need of cooperation with Umno, especially when it comes to the next general election.

Long-time political foes Umno/Barisan joined hands with Pakatan and other political coalitions to form the government post-GE15 last year.

Anwar said one year into his administration, the collaboration with parties, including with Umno, had become much stronger.

"I have not encountered any serious problems in attempting to undertake effective changes and reforms.

"Aside from Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) and Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS), the Umno president has also played an important role in ensuring good relations in the unity government," he explained.

However, Anwar acknowledged that Umno was facing problems and needed to work on restoring its image.

He said the party needed to go to the grassroots and explain things, especially its cooperation with DAP.

"This must be explained as some have accused Umno of derailing from its objectives and principles because the party is now working with DAP," he said.

He also voiced confidence that the changing of administrations through backdoor manoeuvres would not happen as the current government enjoyed strong support from Sarawak.

At a recent meeting, GPS chairman and Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg reiterated his firm stance to maintain the unity government until the next general election, he said.

Anwar said Abang Johari revealed there had been several attempts to persuade him and his party but he firmly rejected them.