

Anwar: Two terms are enough

PM backs proposal to limit tenure but says amending constitution necessary

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PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has thrown his weight behind a bold proposal to limit Malaysia's prime ministerial tenure to 10 years.

"There is a proposal, and I agree with it - to cap the prime minister's tenure at 10 years. As we know, a prime minister can serve for as long as 22 years. I support the limitation," he said at DAP's national congress yesterday.

In a moment of candour, he reassured the crowd that he had no desire to cling to power indefinitely.

"Don't worry, there is no chance I will want to continue beyond 10

years. Even after just two years, I'm already exhausted," he quipped.

Despite his support, Anwar acknowledged that turning this proposal into law would require consensus-building before any constitutional amendments.

"We need to explain, we need to listen. Once we have the necessary support, we can secure a two-thirds majority.

"If we achieve this, we can even table the amendment in the next parliamentary session," he said.

The Prime Minister also cautioned against tabling the motion prematurely without sufficient backing, expressing scepticism about the opposition's stance on constitutional amendments.

"Do not bring forth a motion unless the numbers are secured, because we cannot trust what the opposition claims. Their stance on such matters can shift over time," Anwar said.

Malaysia has historically had no term limits for its prime ministers, allowing them to serve indefinitely as long as they maintain parliamentary support.

In 2019, a Bill was introduced to cap the tenure at two terms to prevent power abuse, but it failed to become law.

At the congress, DAP secretary-general Anthony Loke reiterated his party's call to constitutionally limit a prime minister's term in office, noting that the proposal was part of Pakatan Harapan's

election manifesto and should be implemented while the coalition remains in power.

Loke also advocated for the separation of the roles of Attorney General and public prosecutor to strengthen judicial independence.

In response, Anwar reaffirmed that his government has never interfered in judicial matters - a sharp contrast, he implied, to previous administrations.

"The Bar Council passed a resolution to uphold judicial independence. Let me respond - this government has been in power for over two years. Just two days ago, I met with the Chief Justice. Tell me, in which case have we interfered? Which decision have I

discussed with any judge?" he challenged.

"Not even once did I speak to the judges, the Chief Justice, or any member of the judiciary. Looking at the historical context, this is a major departure from past practices."

While Anwar acknowledged that his government has made strides in protecting judicial independence, he said these efforts have not been effectively communicated to the public.