



Prime Minister's Department staff taking a selfie with Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim after the department's monthly assembly in Putrajaya yesterday. NSTP PIC AIZUDDIN SAAD

REFORM AGENDA

BILL TO CAP PM'S TENURE AT 2 TERMS

Putrajaya to table the proposal this year, says Anwar

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THE government will table a bill this year to limit a prime minister's tenure to two terms, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

This would mean that a prime minister would serve in the position for 10 years at the most.

The prime minister said the bill was among the institutional reforms being implemented by the government for this year's parliamentary session.

"Everyone has a term limit. The chief secretary to the government cannot serve for 10 years, and the same applies to all positions because if a term is given and, during that period, one is able to deliver, it is then better to hand over to the next generation.

"This also applies to the Prime Minister's Department.

"As such, we will table a bill to limit the tenure of the prime minister's post to no more than 10 years or two full terms," he said.

Anwar said this while delivering the 2026 New Year Address at the Prime Minister's Department's monthly assembly here yesterday.

Limiting the prime minister's tenure was among the pledges made by Pakatan Harapan in its 2018 general election manifesto.

Malaysia has had 10 prime ministers since independence, with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad being the longest-serving, holding the post for 22 years from 1981 to 2003.

He later returned to office for nearly two years from 2018 to 2020.

Separately, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said menteri besar and chief ministers would not be covered under the proposed law to limit a prime minister's tenure.

"This doesn't involve the chief ministers and menteri besar... only the prime minister," she said in her own New Year's address to her unit.

So far, Penang is the only state in Malaysia which limits the tenure of its chief executive.

It did this through an amendment to the state constitution in 2018.

Sabah, meanwhile, was reported to be looking into a variation of this rule. Instead of limiting its chief minister to two terms, the Sabah government is reportedly looking at making it two consecutive terms.

Five months ago, Gabungan Rakyat Sabah deputy secretary-general Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali had said the coalition would push for the measure if it returned to power after the Sabah election, which was held on Nov 29.

Armizan had added that the Sabah cabinet had decided to limit the chief minister's tenure in December 2023, but opted to not table an amendment to the state constitution as the state government did not hold a two-thirds majority in the state assembly.

GRS won the election and is leading the Sabah government, but it is unclear whether this remains in the pipeline as the state government still does not hold a two-thirds majority.