

Anwar: Constitutional guarantee for Malay PM not PKR, Pakatan stand
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JOHOR BARU, Nov 26 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim moved to clarify today that Pakatan Rakyat (PR) would not support any move by Umno to amend the Constitution to guarantee a Malay prime minister.

The PKR de facto leader explained that his party youth wing's challenge Umno to do so yesterday was merely a part of PKR's "strategy" and was neither a "Keadilan nor Pakatan Rakyat stand."

"It is a challenge because Umno keeps talking about Malays, Malays, Malays. If Umno is really committed, then we want to see if they dare to do what they talk about in Malay villages," the PKR de facto leader said while seated beside Youth chief Shamsul Iskandar Mohd Akin.

"We will not support it. If they dare to propose it, we will answer that you are just playing on racial sentiment even though you do not help Malays. So that is PKR Youth's strategy," the opposition leader added.

Shamsul had dared Umno yesterday to amend the federal constitution to state that the prime minister must be Malay because "history shows Umno is willing to sell out everything."

"To ensure that the last Malay stronghold, that is political power, is not traded away by Umno, we challenge Umno to amend the federal constitution to insert conditions and guarantees that the prime minister must be Malay.

"The excuse that the post is held by a Malay because Umno is in power cannot be accepted. To cover up their evil, those who question them are accused of betraying Malays," he told close to 800 delegates.

Umno has repeatedly accused PR of selling out the Malays to Chinese and foreign interests, insisting that the Malays can only be protected if Barisan Nasional (BN) remains in power.

Since the landmark Election 2008 where PR denied BN its customary two-thirds majority of Parliament and five state governments, the Malays have swung back towards the ruling coalition even as Chinese support for the federal opposition has increased.

Racial tension has also heightened over the past few years especially with repeated allegations that Muslims are being proselytised.

Umno's Utusan Malaysia accused the DAP earlier this year of conspiring with the church to turn Malaysia into a Christian state and install a Christian prime minister.

A coalition of Muslim NGOs known as Himpunan Sejuta Umat (Gathering of a Million Faithful) has also organised several gatherings around the country to "rise up to the challenge of Christianisation."

Article 153 of the constitution grants the Agong di-Pertuan Agong responsibility to "safeguard the special position of the Malays" and has been interpreted by Malay rights groups to justify special privileges in the economy, religion and education.

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