

**Anwar Challenged To Contest Against Najib In Pekan
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 7 (Bernama) -- Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was today challenged to contest against Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in the prime minister's parliamentary constituency of Pekan in the next general election.

The challenge was issued by the Cheras Umno Division chief Datuk Wira Syed Ali Alhabshee.

"I challenge Anwar to stand against Najib in Pekan. We want to see the extent of his prowess and courage in pulling the wool over the people's eyes in Pahang with various slanderous issues," he said.

Anwar, who is seen as the likely choice for prime minister if the opposition pact wins the 13th general election, yesterday challenged Najib to contest against Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang in the PAS president's parliamentary constituency of Marang in Terengganu.

In a post on the website of Cheras Umno, Syed Ali said Anwar should have been man enough to take up the challenge himself instead of proposing another opposition leader.

However, Syed Ali said he believed that Anwar would not be bold enough to contest in Pekan or Marang for he knew that the voters there, a majority of whom were Malays, were not yet ready to accept political leaders like him.

Syed Ali claimed that Anwar's challenge for Najib to contest in Marang was a ploy to "destroy Hadi's political career".

He said Hadi was a major obstacle to Anwar's wish to become the prime minister. Anwar was sacked as the deputy prime minister and Umno deputy president in September 1998 and had been jailed for abuse of power.

Syed Ali said Anwar's political ambition had the strong backing of opposition pact partner DAP which suspects the sincerity of PAS, the other partner in the three-party coalition.

Syed Ali said he believed that Hadi would not leave his safe Marang constituency although he had said he would contest anywhere the party wanted him to, even if it were Pekan.

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