

**Anwar confirms Najib proposed unity government, reports Asia Sentinel
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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak (pic) has been reaching out to opposition chief Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to explore the possibility of a ground-breaking unity government, a long shot possibility at best given the zero sum game climate in Malaysian politics.

In an interview with the Asia Sentinel, Anwar said that the peace moves were initiated by Najib, but he had sent word through intermediaries that attacks by Utusan Malaysia on the Chinese and Indian communities would have to cease, before any progress could be made.

He also wanted as a condition the lowering of the racial temperature in Malaysia.

"I said the fundamental issues must be addressed, ending the racial stuff, there has to be a clear understanding and commitment to reform and change, " he said.

Anwar has not received any reply from Najib.

The overtures of a unity government were made through former Indonesian vice-president Jusuf Kalla and these included a few visits to Kuala Lumpur, the latest a few weeks ago.

Earlier in the year, Kalla was unsuccessful in trying to broker a commitment from Najib and Anwar to accept the outcome of GE13, regardless of the coalition which won.

It is unclear why Najib would send feelers for a unity government given the antipathy in Umno towards Anwar and his partners in Pakatan Rakyat.

Within Umno there is a sense that while Barisan Nasional is weak, the ruling party is in a strong position, having won 88 of the 133 parliamentary seats on offer at GE13, and winning the popular vote. In this current mood, party leaders would view offering any olive branch to the opposition as a weakness.

The Asia Sentinel offered this interpretation on the unity government move: "Presumably the Najib gambit opens another front against Mahathir, who has been allowing surrogate bloggers to attack the wounded prime minister ever since the election." - August 12, 2013.

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