

Let's talk, for the sake of the nation, Anwar tells Putrajaya
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Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (pic) has signalled his readiness to meet Putrajaya over several issues for the sake of the nation's well-being and future.

"Notwithstanding our strong protests about the validity of the outcome of the last elections, we are prepared to put aside our differences for the sake of the nation," he said.

"We believe that it is imperative for the prime minister to convene without the slightest delay a round-table meeting between the BN government and Pakatan Rakyat in order to deliberate on the issues raised and formulate a comprehensive solution."

Anwar, in his Merdeka Day speech, also pushed for a quick meeting between both parties to solve various issues plaguing the country.

"The meeting between both sides must be held immediately to save Malaysia, especially in light of the country's 56th birthday tomorrow," he said.

The Prime Minister's office has so far brushed aside talk of a unity government, saying there will be no discussions on that subject until the opposition stops challenging the results of the general election which was held in May.

Anwar said although Pakatan Rakyat won the popular vote, it is ready to overlook the errors and mistakes of the Election Commission.

He added that the topics to be covered in any discussion must include racial and religious issues that had caused some tension recently.

Other pressing issues include the slowing down of the nation's economy and the rising crime rate, which was worrying the public both in the urban and rural areas.

"Discussions should also touch on the administrative aspect of the government to curb corruption and lack of transparency in the issuance of tenders," Anwar said.

The opposition leader wants Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to be open to discussions because there are many policies and programmes which need more attention.

"Pakatan Rakyat's willingness to invite Barisan Nasional to the negotiation table isn't just about forming a unified government but also an act commonly adopted by democratic governments," he said.

Speaking of the recent Fitch ratings downgrade for Malaysia, Anwar said the government could save about RM20 billion annually if it managed the country's economy better.

"In order to achieve this objective, it is imperative that Barisan Nasional reduce the country's fiscal deficit and tackle the issue of corruption on the issuance of tenders.

"The government should also stop inciting the public by using mainstream media organisations and non-governmental organisations as propaganda tools.

"As we celebrate the nation's 56th birthday, our communities should be educated to be more mature instead of being exposed to political agendas which can tear a country apart."
– August 30, 2013.

* This is a corrected report of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's press conference today. - Editor

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