

Najib says no decision yet on Permatang Pauh
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By Md Izwan

Ruling coalition Barisan Nasional will only decide on its next course of action for the Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat once the Election Commission (EC) declares a by-election for the seat currently held by jailed opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who is also Umno president and BN chairman, said yesterday the coalition and Umno would wait for the EC's announcement before deciding on the next step as "there are constitutional matters that needed to be resolved".

This follows Anwar family's move yesterday to seek a royal pardon over his sodomy conviction.

PKR said that the initiative to seek a royal pardon from the King for its de facto leader, who risked losing his seat, was done by the family and not the party.

"We'll wait until the interpretation of the constitution is done before deciding," Najib told a press conference after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

He said Umno will not make any announcement until the EC has made its decision on the matter and determined the status of the parliamentary seat.

"The EC will weigh in on the issue and once it has decided, our supreme council will make the decision," he said.

On 10 February, Anwar failed in his final appeal in the Federal Court against his conviction for sodomising his former aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan seven years ago.

Following this decision, his status as an elected MP for Permatang Pauh hangs in a balance. A petition for pardon would delay Anwar's disqualification as a lawmaker.

The Federal Constitution states that the seat will not be declared vacant until the Pardons Board has deliberated and made a decision. – February 26, 2015.

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