

DATE: 17/9/2008

# At the end of the day, Abdullah is still the boss

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ZUBAIDAH  
ABU BAKAR



He says he is only holding back taking on BN by force, at least this is what he told a large gathering for Malaysia Day celebrations at the MBPJ Stadium in Kelana Jaya on Monday.

He now seeks a discussion with Abdullah for a peaceful handing over of power and has written a letter to the premier for a meeting.

Sceptics may have long brushed off the takeover talk as a political tactic to destabilise Abdullah's administration but Anwar's supporters and opposition leaders are least in doubt that he indeed has a clear and concrete plan to get into the seat of power in Putrajaya.

The new target date for the takeover, says Parti Keadilan Nasional strategist Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, back in the country also on Monday after he and four others had trailed BN MPs on an agricultural study tour in Taiwan, is before Hari Raya.

"The number in hand is far more than required. The takeover can be effected any time from now, it won't take long," he says.

Saifuddin had gone further, claiming that contacts had been made with the BN backbenchers who had earlier signed statutory declarations or made written pledges in support of Anwar and that Pakatan's mission in the Taiwan capital had been accomplished.

Now, if you think this sounds too good to be true, try swallowing this: Pakatan says it has close to 20 Umno MPs in the bag.

If this is true, it should quash fear among leaders of its ally Pas of a prospect of Pakatan Rakyat having a government with more non-Muslim representatives in Parliament.

Concerns over lower Malay representation had sparked off debates and subsequent calls for a review of Pas' position in Pakatan Rakyat at the party's muktamar or annual assembly in Ipoh last month.

The conservative Islamist party, however, vowed to remain committed to Pakatan Rakyat and support Anwar as prime minister despite members engaged in hot debates over suggestions that its president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang should

become prime minister instead, if Pakatan comes to power.

Anwar is also anxiously waiting for the outcome of Umno's supreme council monthly meeting tomorrow, in anticipation of an important development which could either strengthen or weaken Abdullah's grip on his party and government.

Abdullah is facing pressure within the party to speed up the 2010 transfer of power agreed between him and his deputy Datuk Seri Najib Razak and later endorsed by the supreme council. The matter tops tomorrow's agenda.

Najib is still in support of the plan provided it has the blessings of Umno divisions, which will convene their meetings from Oct 9 when they will also propose candidates for the December party elections.

Senior Umno leaders have come in support of Najib's view that the grassroots should decide on the transition plan, along with an earlier statement by party vice-president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin that Abdullah should rethink the timetable for the transfer of power.

And while Malaysians wait for further developments in the local political scene, Anwar still is a prime ministerial aspirant.

## WHAT THEY SAY

'It is a drama of the highest order and should enter the Malaysia Book of Records as the greatest bluff.'

Datuk Seri Dr James Masing  
Parti Rakyat Sarawak president

'His self-enforced deadline to take over the Federal Government is distracting the people from their daily lives and is bad for the economy.'

Dr Stephen Runding  
State Barisan Nasional and PBB secretary-general

'He is simply