

I would be upset if there was Anwar-Daim rift, says Dr M

By Syed Nadzri

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he would be most disturbed and upset if there was indeed a rift between Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and the Government's Economic Adviser Tun Daim Zainuddin.

"If there is such a rift, then I should be *gelabah* (disturbed) and *susah hati* (upset) today. But I have no problems," Dr Mahathir told reporters after meeting delegates of a consultation gathering involving Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) and its Commonwealth Private Sector partners.

The Prime Minister was asked to comment on reports of a friction in the relationship of Anwar and Daim. Both have since denied that there was such a rift.

Dr Mahathir said it was not possible to have two closely-linked persons agreeing with each other all the time, including in a marriage.

"There could have been a difference in opinion, but that is not a problem.

"Don't tell me we have to agree 100 per cent with each other. Even in Umno, we do not agree with one another all the time, because if that's the case we do not have to call for meetings. It would be enough to just wait for directives from me," he quipped.

Rumours about the rift was first highlighted in the May 11 issue of the *Asiaweek* magazine which quoted Parti Rakyat Malaysia chairman Syed Husin Ali as saying that there might be greater friction between Daim and Anwar because of the apparent withholding by Daim of certain economic opportunities from Anwar's men.

The report also stated that the two were not on good terms because some of Anwar's men were hoping to obtain economic opportunities which Daim was withholding from them.

Daim denied the rumours in Petaling Jaya on Saturday, saying that he had been in constant touch with Anwar.

He also said the rumours were concocted by sections of the foreign Press.

Anwar's denial came yesterday in Bukit Mertajam, in reply to Press queries, that there was no basis or truth in the allegations as they were not only good friends but also family friends.

Daim and Anwar also brushed aside reports that they had their respective "men" who were out for business opportunities.

Daim said he did not have any men while Anwar said such factions did not exist.