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Dr M, Anwar discuss Cabinet and CM's post

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he and his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had discussed the reshuffle of the Cabinet and the appointment of the new Malacca Chief Minister.

"He knows my view and I know his, and basically we do not disagree," the Prime Minister said when asked whether he had made the major decisions (on the Cabinet reshuffle and the appointment of the new Malacca Chief Minister) as he was going on two-months' leave from Monday.

Asked to elaborate on what he meant, Dr Mahathir said: "Whatever... because he is going to be acting Prime Minister and has the right to act as Prime Minister."

He was speaking to reporters after performing the ground breaking ceremony for the Cyberjaya city located near Dengkil, about 60km from here.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar has full powers to carry on the duties as Prime Minister during his absence.

"My deputy will have full power to carry on the duties of the Prime Minister.

"Of course if there is anything very special I will have to cut short my leave ... so I hope you do not create anything," he said.

Dr Mahathir said this in response to another question on whether the sharp drop in shares prices on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange was due, among others, to his decision to take leave and the crisis facing the Thai baht.

He said stock market players were on the lookout for all kind of signals although they were unrelated to the counters' performance.

The Malaysian economy and its fundamentals were good and the companies on the KLSE were making profits, he added.

"Yet, because something is happening elsewhere, they (investors) pull out their investments," he said.

On his return from a three-nation African tour on May 8, Dr Mahathir had brushed aside speculation that he was taking a long vacation because of health reasons, saying he would undertake several official duties even when on leave.

He will promote the Multimedia Super Corridor in England and visit several places known for the work and research on computers and information technology.

He had said the time was right for him to go on a long leave because the country was politically stable and economically strong.

"This is the best time for me to go. It is the best time to refresh my mind, without having the Press asking me too many questions." he said.

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