

# Mahathir: Anwar acting like a desperate man<sup>18</sup>

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was acting like a desperate man.

Dr Mahathir said Anwar, who had called for his resignation as Prime Minister, came up with these "proposals" out of desperation.

"I can understand his feelings, he has been dismissed. He cannot dismiss me, so he has asked for my resignation," he told a press conference yesterday after a visit to Commonwealth Games press centre at Mint Hotel.

Dr Mahathir's comments were made at noon, six hours before Anwar's supporters caused disturbances in various part of the city and the eventual arrest of the latter.

"The fact is Anwar has been breaking the law including holding illegal rallies," he said.

On Anwar's adopted brother and a Pakistani friend who pleaded guilty on Saturday to charges of

allowing Anwar to sodomise them, Dr Mahathir said he believed the claims to be true.

"Nobody in their right minds would confess to something that would be very damaging to themselves if it were untrue," he said.

"I believe Anwar felt quite safe because he thought that those people would never admit to something they would be very ashamed of," he said.

To a question, Dr Mahathir said he had accepted the fact that his former deputy had behaved "in this-way."

The Prime Minister said when the matter was first brought to his attention, he had dismissed it as efforts by people to bring down his deputy but after the evidence proved to be "too strong," he had to accept the fact.

"I had to take action. And now I think I am beyond being surprised.

"I think this is something apparently he (An-

war) indulges in, to my regret," he added.

Asked by a foreign journalist how long he wanted to see Anwar in jail, Dr Mahathir said:

"I don't enjoy these things, you know. It is not in my-nature to gloat over what happens to people, who for reasons of their own have committed these kinds of act.

"I don't enjoy it. I wish he hadn't done this. And he should have succeeded me and everything would be fine. But here, I have this thing thrown in my face at a time when I least needed it.

"I have got an economic problem to deal with, the Commonwealth Games coming along and Apec and of course I have you (journalists) coming here to watch all these things.

"I don't enjoy this. But it happens," he said.

On capital controls introduced, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was only acting to protect its own economy.