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PM: I won't run away from Kubang Pasu constituency

ALOR STAR, Sun. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he would contest in his own constituency of Kubang Pasu in the next general election and would not "run away" elsewhere as speculated by the Opposition.

"I will remain here (Kubang Pasu) and will not run away. The people still support me and want me here. So, I will remain here," he said.

He was asked whether he would leave Kubang Pasu to contest elsewhere.

Dr Mahathir, who has been Kubang Pasu MP since 1974, had been rumoured to stand as candidate in a number of other places, including Lumut and Langkawi.

On his visit to Kubang Pasu, Dr Mahathir said he had returned two days ago to listen to problems faced by his constituents and to open the Kubang Pasu Umno delegates' meeting yesterday.

He said he found that those who had been in Umno for a long time did not regard the Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim issue as something big.

Only a small number were influenced by the Opposition's allegations.

Asked to elaborate on his statement yesterday that a crony of a national leader had amassed wealth of more than RM230 million, the Prime Minister said the Anwar's crony was involved in the plot during the Umno general assembly last year.

"I cannot name him ... all I can say is that he is just the chairman of a few companies. He is not even that good in business.

"He is a former high-ranking Umno leader who was very close to Anwar who used him to accuse me with all sorts of things ... to make me unpopular," Dr Mahathir told a Press conference at the Sultan Abdul Halim airport in Kepala Batas at the end of his three-day visit to Kedah.

Yesterday, Dr Mahathir had said a former Umno leader had misused his position and helped his crony amass wealth.

He said he knew many of Anwar's cronies who had a lot of money because Umno leaders were required to declare their assets to the Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir said he had once questioned Anwar how an individual who did not have so much money previously could amass RM230 million.

However, he said, Anwar reacted as though he was surprised.

Dr Mahathir did not discount the possibility of some of them having stashed wealth overseas.

He said Anwar had forced some companies to hire his cronies and pay them exorbitant salaries. Citing an example, he said Anwar forced the New Straits Times Press to hire his former speechwriter Dr Munawar Anees.

"We know another of Anwar's speechwriter was on the payroll of a company, I was told the company was forced to hire the speechwriter..."

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