

Dr M: Anwar afraid, hence the delay tactics

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Dr Mahathir Mohamad has accused Anwar Ibrahim of deliberately delaying the Sodomy II appeal hearing because "he knows he has committed a mistake".

The former prime minister was commenting on the application filed by the defence to recuse Muhammad Shafee Abdullah from leading the prosecution as well as the move to recall former police officer Jude Blacious Pereira.

Pereira was the investigating officer in the Sodomy II case, which followed a police report filed by Anwar's former aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

"Anwar is prolonging the case as he is afraid of the appeal as he knows he has committed a mistake.

"Furthermore, he is afraid of Shafee as the senior lawyer had won many complex cases," Malay daily Sinar Harian quotes Mahathir as saying.

Anwar, who is slated to contest in the March 23 Kajang by-election, has always maintained that the charges against him were fabricated.

In 1998, Mahathir had sacked Anwar as deputy prime minister, saying Anwar was morally unfit.

Mahathir then went on to declare his support for PAS to take the Selangor menteri besar's post should it be vacated by incumbent Abdul Khalid Ibrahim.

He noted that PAS has 15 state seats, compared with PKR, which has 14.

"PAS is qualified to fill the post of menteri besar. The post cannot be dominated by one party alone.

"They are not like BN, where the biggest number of seat comes from Umno and that is why the Umno leader becomes the prime minister.

"But in Selangor, it is not PKR which has the biggest power," Mahathir added.

The former prime minister said this when asked to comment on the possibility of

Anwar becoming Selangor MB.

Asked who should be BN's candidate to contest in Kajang, Mahathir said the candidate was not important.

What was important, he added, was the party that is able to provide service to the people. On this note, Mahathir felt that PKR had failed to represent the voters of Kajang.

On another matter, Mahathir also gave his approval to the selection of Adenan Satem to replace Abdul Taib Mahmud as Sarawak chief minister.

"It is a good choice as Adenan has served the state and also at the federal level as a federal minister," he said.

Taib will be stepping down on Feb 28, after three decades as Sarawak's head of government.

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