

**Mahathir on Anwar: Hatchet buried, now working together**  
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EXCLUSIVE Dr Mahathir Mohamad shocked Malaysians last month when he turned up at the High Court in Kuala Lumpur to meet his former deputy turned nemesis, Anwar Ibrahim.

The image of the two smiling political titans shaking hands, for the first time in 18 years, quickly went viral and became an iconic moment.

But many were let down when Mahathir said he was only there to support Anwar's bid to quash the National Security Council Act, and that they did not make peace.

However, one month later, the 91-year-old former prime minister indicated, in an exclusive interview with *Malaysiakini* that any bad feelings the two had for each other were no more.

"I have already buried the hatchet," Mahathir said.

Asked if he felt there was no more bad blood between him and Anwar, he simply replied: "I should hope so."

However, the brief answers he gave when asked about Anwar were in stark contrast with the rest of the interview.

Perhaps Mahathir was not quite ready to open up about how he felt, being on the same side again with the man who was once his heir apparent.

Either that, or he is still not yet Anwar's biggest fan and would rather not dwell on the subject.

The two had a bitter fallout in 1998, when Anwar began accusing Mahathir of corruption and cronyism, prompting the latter to sack the former as deputy prime minister.

Anwar was then charged with sodomy and corruption, and sentenced to jail in 1999. The sodomy conviction was overturned by the Federal Court in 2004.

The PKR de facto leader had claimed that the charge against him was politically motivated, but Mahathir dismissed this.

"The police say they have evidence, it is their business to decide (to charge Anwar)," Mahathir said.

He also denied knowledge on whether the second sodomy conviction against Anwar was also politically motivated, saying: "I wouldn't know, that came after I stepped down."

As for how far he's willing to work with his former blue-eyed boy to take down Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, Mahathir simply said he did not know how to measure "the distance of working", but noted that up till now, the two of them "are working together".

In the following excerpt of *Malaysiakini's* exclusive interview, the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) chairperson talks about his new party and the opposition's chances of winning the next general election, and what role PAS would play.

The interview has been edited for language and brevity.

**Do you think Bersatu can win rural Malay seats in the next election?**

Enough seats.

**Can Bersatu and the opposition win the next election?**

We have a good chance to win, provided we don't fight each other.

**Even with the alleged gerrymandering?**

Even with the gerrymandering. If we can control corruption, stop Najib from buying votes, we have a fair election, a clean election, I think we have a very good chance of winning.

**Do you think that is going to happen, or do you think Najib will cheat?**

He will try and cheat; he will try and use money. But I think we will campaign against corruption.

**PAS has said it is unwilling to join the opposition, unless they accept an Islamist agenda?**

We have been discussing. There are means and ways of overcoming that.

**What is your advice to DAP and PAS?**

Think about the objective. The objective is to overthrow this government, and the best way to overthrow the government is for us to work as one party

**So you are confident you can get PAS on board?**

I don't know about that, I won't say I'm confident, but some way of working together can be found.

**If PAS decides to team up with Umno, or throw a wrench at the opposition by contesting in three-cornered fights, will it flush all your plans down the drain?**

It might, we may not get the majority. In fact, if PAS does that, PAS is supporting Najib's 1MDB.

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