

Anwar invites Mahathir to advise the Opposition

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KUALA TERENGGANU: Former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has ironically come to the defence of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Anwar said Umno leaders were forgetting Dr Mahathir's

immense contributions.

He also invited the former prime minister to serve as advisor to the Opposition.

The Parti Keadilan Rakyat adviser said: "Despite my differences with Dr Mahathir, I pity him somewhat, as he is being rebuked and criticised by Umno leaders who had once

honoured him.

"He had led the country for 22 years and contributed immensely to the country and now it looks like Umno leaders are forgetting his contributions.

"I am not supporting him but he should be accorded respect as a former premier."

On his invitation to Dr Mahathir to be advisor to the Opposition parties, Anwar said: "I might have been mistreated in the past and could have had differences with him, but this will not be a hindrance.

"As long as he is a citizen, I respect his views, and any

attempts by him to join the Opposition will not be blocked by me," Anwar told reporters after a PKR Hari Raya gathering at Pekan Batu 6, Kuala Nerus, here yesterday.

He acknowledged that the leaders of Opposition parties had to reach a consensus before Dr Mahathir could be appoint-

ed advisor.

However, Anwar did hit out at Dr Mahathir for labelling the country a "police state" under Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"He is now swallowing his own bitter pills, as he had once run the country in such a manner," Anwar added.