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General election date is up to govt: Mahathir

PUTRAJAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday it is the government's prerogative to decide on the date of the general elections.

Commenting on the call by opposition parties for the government to consult them before deciding on the election date, the former premier said it was just not done.

"Nowhere in the world discussions are held on the date of general elections. It is the government's prerogative.

"If they want to decide (on the date), be the government first. It is the government's prerogative to decide on the right time to dissolve the parliament," he said.

Earlier this week, Pakatan Rakyat leaders had called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak to negotiate and fix the date of the next general election together to avoid any dispute over the implementation of promised electoral reforms.

PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub said such a move would show the government's commitment to electoral reforms.

Mahathir, who is also Proton adviser, was speaking to reporters after the handing over of Proton electric vehicles to the Prime Minister's Office and four other ministries here.

On conditions set by the Opposition regarding the parliamentary select committee on electoral reforms, Mahathir said he believes the government would look into them.

"If their suggestions are reasonable



or suitable, I am confident that the government would consider them. But, at the same time, the government may have a different opinion," he said.

On an online report that the general

election would be held very soon, Mahathir said he had no knowledge of the matter. "I know Datuk Seri Najib (Abdul Razak) but I cannot read his mind," he added.