

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	06 JUNE 2017

PAKATAN'S PM CANDIDATE

ANWAR: IT'S NOT FOR DR M TO DECIDE

NST - 6/6/2017 Pg. 9

Pact must reach a consensus on matter, says Anwar

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PAKATAN Harapan will have the final say on who its candidate is for prime minister, said jailed former opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the opposition pact must reach a consensus on the matter, adding that no individual could "volunteer" for the job.

Anwar was responding to his enemy-turned-ally Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent statement that he might be "forced to consider" becoming prime minister again if Pakatan Harapan had such a plan for him.

Anwar said the decision was not Dr Mahathir's to make.

"It is not for him (to decide), it is for Harapan (to decide).

"People don't volunteer (to be prime minister). There has to be a consensus," Anwar told reporters at the Syariah Appeals Court in Shah Alam yesterday.

During a live session on his Facebook page last week, Dr Mahathir was asked whether he would agree to becoming the country's prime minister again, if the opposition won the 14th General Election.

"I cannot be-lakangkan (ignore) my friends in the Pakatan Harapan coalition. If they have such a plan and it is agreed upon, I would be forced to consider it."

The 92-year-old, however, had

said at the moment, he would not agree to being reappointed as prime minister.

Dr Mahathir stepped down in 2003 after 22 years in office.

He is currently the chairman of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), which has allied itself with PKR, DAP and Parti Amanah Negara (PAN) in Pakatan Harapan.

His son and PPBM deputy president Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir was quoted as saying that he was unsure if Dr Mahathir was joking about considering taking over

the top post again.

The prime ministerial candidate fiasco started when PKR, during its national congress last month, unanimously named Anwar as its prime minister-designate,

with party leaders holding placards bearing the words "Anwar as the 7th PM".

However, Dr Mahathir and PPBM president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin refrained from doing so, which sparked speculation that the duo disagreed with their allies on the subject.

The Pakatan Harapan Presidential Council is expected to hold a meeting this Friday to, among others, iron out any disagreements over its leadership lineup.

"I believe the priority of PPBM and Dr Mahathir is to defeat BN.

The issue of who should become prime minister will not get in the way of achieving that objective.

"Dr Mahathir has said many times the PM's post is not his prime objective.

"We have said many times that we will address the issue of who becomes the prime minister if and when Pakatan wins GE14," PAN communications director Khalid Samad told the *New Straits Times* yesterday.

He also expressed doubt that the issue would prompt PPBM to leave the pact, saying the party would not be able to win GE14 without Pakatan Harapan's help.

PKR vice-president Tian Chua, meanwhile, said: "We must ensure that we are united by going one-to-one against BN and we

must have a consensus on the prime minister-designate.

"I hope everyone sticks to that basic understanding because if we do, I am confident we will be able to win GE14."



Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad