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Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	31/12/2018

## Dr M: Remaining PM for full term not possible

NST- 31/12/2018 pg-3

**PUTRAJAYA:** The proposals put forward by delegates at the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) annual general assembly urging party chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to remain as the prime minister for the full term until the 15th General Election (GE15) cannot be implemented.

Dr Mahathir said the agreement he would be the prime minister for a certain period was a sacrifice that Bersatu members should accept.

He said the agreement, which was inked before GE14 with Pakatan Harapan component parties, was to enable old foes to unite and bring down former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"I am aware that there is a push for this old prime minister to remain as long as possible.

"But in the past we were part of the opposition and we established the party (Bersatu),

with the hope of receiving support from people, especially Malays.

"If we received the support of Malays only, without the support of other parties, I don't think we could have won. To have a coalition, we would have to negotiate with parties who are friendly to us.

"One of the conditions attached is that I, who was their foe, can be appointed as a temporary prime minister.

"So we have to make a sacrifice and accept the condition because the main aim is not in becoming the prime minister, but to topple Najib, that is our struggle," he said in a winding-up speech at Bersatu's second general assembly yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said Bersatu members needed to compromise and accept the deal because the sacrifice made by each PH component party at that time resulted in their victory.

"In a struggle, there needs to be compromise.

"If we stubbornly insist (on our demands), we will perish, (which is) far from reaching our goal," he said.

Earlier, on the sidelines of the event, Dr Mahathir said he would not renege on his promise to remain as prime minister for two years.

"Different people have their opinions. But (I) have to keep my promise," he said.

The call for the 93-year-old to remain prime minister until GE15 appeared to be the "hot item" of the assembly's debate sessions.

It is understood that the proposal was first tabled by Kelantan delegate Zulkifli Zakaria, who is Bachok division chief, during the debate on the chairman's policy speech.

The call has since gained traction among delegates, with even Srikandi (women's wing) chief

Datuk Seri Rina Harun echoing that the wing was in support of the idea.

Dr Mahathir, when asked on the level of support demonstrated by delegates for the idea, smiled.

"I wouldn't know.

"But many of them stood up (to show support when the proposal was mooted)."

A source, who is a member of the party's supreme leadership council, said that delegates had made the proposal.

This was verified by one of the delegates, Selayang division chief Zulkifli Mohamad, who said at least eight delegates from different states had called for the move during the debate sessions.

"Each time it was suggested that Dr Mahathir should remain as prime minister until the next general election, all delegates rose and shout '*Hidup Tun*' (Long live Tun) three times," he said.