

'Let Dr M, Anwar handle handover'

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PETALING JAYA: It is best for Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his expected successor Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to sort out

the handover of power by themselves, say political analysts.

Prof Madya Dr Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani of Universiti Utara Malaysia said other party leaders should cease issuing statements about the matter.

He was responding to a statement by Youth and Sports Minister Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman that no handover plans were ever mentioned in the documents signed by members of the Pakatan Harapan presidential council prior to the 14th general election.

But several PH leaders have said there was a consensus for Anwar to take over as prime minister by May 9 next year.

Mohd Azizuddin said it is better for the transition to take place earlier to give Anwar more time to prepare for the next general election.

"Anwar needs to be given time (as prime minister) to lead the coalition into the next GE.

"It's best if he's given three years, but I would say at a minimum he needs two years," he said.

He expressed concern over a rift in the coalition and that could lead to decreased voter confidence.

"I expect internal problems in PH, and this could lead to the *rakyat* having less confidence in the government," he said.

Assoc Prof Dr Awang Azman Awang Pawi said

Mahathir has to outline the transition plan.

Mahathir has pledged to step down but he said he needed time to ensure that the country is on the right track and it could take him up to three years to achieve that.

Awang Azman of Universiti Malaya said if Mahathir decided to stay on beyond two years it could have a negative impact on the government's popularity rating.

A survey carried out by pollster Merdeka Centre in April showed Mahathir's approval rating as prime minister had already dropped to 46% from 71% in August last year while PH's rating was at 39%, down from 79% previously.