

Dr M non-committal on power transition date

PUTRAJAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has avoided committing to a specific date to hand over the reins to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who however expressed confidence over the agreed transition plan.

With certain quarters voicing concern on when the power transition would take place, the Prime Minister was asked if giving a specific date would put the issue to rest.

To this, the 94-year-old Dr Mahathir replied: "We have to study the situation. It will be difficult to fix a specific date (when) work is half done or not done," he said when met by reporters after launching the Security and Public Order Policy here.

On calls for the premiership to be handed to Anwar soon, Dr Mahathir reiterated this was an issue that has

not been discussed.

During a dialogue on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly recently, the Prime Minister said he may have at most three years and will bow out before the next general election.

In an interview, Anwar had said he expects to become prime minister next year.

Various quarters, including PAS, have called for Dr Mahathir to serve out the full five-year term.

In SHAH ALAM, Anwar in expressing his confidence over the agreed transition plan between him and Dr Mahathir said the exact date would be discussed later.

The PKR president said he was bound by the Pakatan Harapan consensus and pointed that Dr Mahathir had also been consistent with

regard to his promise to step down.

"In my weekly session with the Prime Minister, I don't find any problem in terms of the issue of transition and I am satisfied with his (Dr Mahathir) continued assurance and guarantee that he will honour the promise," he told reporters after a dialogue session at Universiti Teknologi Mara here.

Asked if on how he felt, despite having no time frame, the Port Dickson MP said: "We view it positively.

"We have always said we should not, at least publicly, state a time because that would render the rule of the prime minister as quite ineffective.

"I do not see it as a problem but that will not stop people from speculating. There is this clear under-

standing, to my mind, except for a specific date," added Anwar.

Pressed to reveal whether there was no proper time frame discussed, Anwar said to suggest that there was no discussion was not quite right.

On complaints that there was uncertainty among the business community due to unclear transition plan, Anwar said there shouldn't be anxiety even when he assumed the premiership.

"The broad policies of Pakatan will remain. There is certainty because the Prime Minister is Mahathir and also Pakatan.

"What is important, people tend to underestimate the importance of Pakatan. Pakatan has made the decision and will honour it," he said.