

Support for Dr M is not Umno's stance

Zahid also denies Hishammuddin leading 30 Barisan MPs in move to back Mahathir

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KUALA LUMPUR: While a number of Umno lawmakers have come out in support of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to serve a full term as the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi says it is not Umno's official stand.

The party president said for now, Umno's stand is to respect the present government.

Supporting Dr Mahathir for a full tenure is "not Umno's official stand and I respect any personal opinions", he told reporters at the Parliament lobby yesterday.

Ahmad Zahid also shot down speculation that former Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein is trying to get 30 MPs from Umno and Barisan Nasional to back Dr Mahathir to remain as premier for a full term.

"As a country that practises democracy, the democratic system through general elections is the foundation to the formation of a government. I don't think that speculation will be a reality," he said.

The Bagan Datuk MP added that Pakatan Harapan leaders should not be too concerned about the speculation because "it will not happen if it is unrequited (love)".

After talk surfaced that Hishammuddin was spearheading a move to oust DAP and

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Parti Amanah Negara in a bid to form a new government, the Sembrong MP denied initiating such a move.

His denial came a day after Pakatan's statement on Oct 15 affirming that the coalition would still include DAP and Amanah, and urged opposition politicians to stop their alleged campaign to eliminate the two parties from the government.

On Oct 22, Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali said Dr Mahathir should be allowed to complete a full term as premier to "respect the people's wishes".

The PKR deputy president also denied there

was an agreement by Pakatan on a date for his party president and Port Dickson MP Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to take over as prime minister.

Meanwhile, in Parliament yesterday, Datin Mastura Mohd Yazid (BN-Kuala Kangsar) said Dr Mahathir and his coalition were elected by the people and the rakyat want stability until the next general election.

"He was chosen by the people so he should continue to lead," she said.

Datuk Ahmad Nazlan Idris (BN-Jerantut) called on Pakatan leaders to stop any polemic in calling for a power transition.

"If the fight for power continues, I am afraid that the country will not be stable politically and the people will be unhappy," he said.

Datuk Abdul Rahman Mohamad (BN-Lipis) said despite being an opposition lawmaker, he has no other choice but to support Dr Mahathir as the Prime Minister to ensure political stability.

"Please do not destabilise his leadership to allow him to carry on with his duties effectively," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Ismail Abdul Muttalib (BN-Maran) said Dr Mahathir still has many promises that he needs to fulfil to the people.

"So it is the responsibility of the government of the day to implement its policies.

"There are no concrete reasons to ask him to step down as the prime minister," he said.

Mohd Shahar Abdullah (BN-Paya Besar)

said any plot to form a "back door" government would not bring any benefits, especially to the economy and the youth.

"We want clear policies that will bring direct benefits to the younger generation.

"We hope Pakatan leaders will focus on governing the country instead of thinking about the transition of power," he said.

Meanwhile, PAS chief whip in Parliament Datuk Takiyuddin Hassan has reiterated the support of the party's MPs for Dr Mahathir's leadership as the Prime Minister.

The PAS secretary-general said the current political climate in the country had caused uneasiness, especially among the rakyat who want to see a stable administration.

He noted that there had been efforts to undermine the Prime Minister's leadership and unresolved conflicts within Pakatan Harapan.

"The position (strength) of the Prime Minister is important for the well-being of the country. But it seems like the internal matters in the government are yet to be resolved.

"And some want Langkawi (Dr Mahathir) to stay until he completes his term, some don't," he said during his debate on Budget 2020 in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

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