

## **Dr M dismisses Invoke survey, says anyone can be candidate**

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**By Sean Augustin**

### **PPBM chairman Mahathir Mohamad says no one listed in the survey would be prime minister if opposition fails to win next general election.**

KUALA LUMPUR: Dr Mahathir Mohamad has seemingly dismissed a survey by PKR-linked Invoke which revealed that his former protege, Anwar Ibrahim topped the list of most preferred candidates for prime minister among opposition leaders.

While Mahathir acknowledged that the imprisoned former opposition leader was one of the candidates, the PPBM chairman pointed out that none of those in the survey would be named as prime minister if the opposition did not win the general election.

“Otherwise, anyone can be a candidate,” the former prime minister told reporters after attending a ceramah in Kampung Baru, here, last night.

Mahathir then said that the candidates for the PM should only be named when the opposition wrest Putrajaya from the Barisan Nasional.

“If we suggest names even when we haven’t won, that is ‘syok sendiri.’”

Yesterday, PKR vice-president Rafizi Ramli unveiled the survey results which listed nine opposition leaders as possible prime minister.

Anwar led everyone else with 23.5% of the votes, followed by PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang with 17.6%.

Mahathir came third with 16.5%, followed by PPBM president Muhyiddin Yassin (12.6%), Rafizi (10.7%), and PPBM deputy president Mukhriz Mahathir (8.4%).

PKR president and possible interim prime minister, Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, bagged only 4.5% of the votes.

She came out ahead of PKR deputy president Mohamed Azmin Ali (3.5%) and the party’s vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar (2.6%).

The survey, which was conducted from Feb 6 this year to May 23, came just days after ties between PKR and its newest ally, PPBM, soured following an incident at the party’s recent congress.

There, PKR delegates raised placards calling for Anwar to become Malaysia’s “7th prime minister” as PPBM leaders looked on.

Mahathir had two days ago in an exclusive interview with FMT, ruled out suggestions that he could make a prime ministerial comeback, saying there was no point discussing the prime minister-designate if the coalition still fails to win at the next national general election (GE14).

Malaysia's longest serving PM – who former Umno minister Zaid Ibrahim identified as the person most suitable for the post to ensure political stability should there be a change of government – also said that he had no intention to become a candidate at GE14 as he was “old”.

The PPBM chairman also said that the Pakatan Harapan government would still have to adhere to the rule of law if there was a plan to appoint Anwar to lead the new government.

Anwar is currently serving a five-year sentence for sodomising his former aide and is due for release in 2020. The country's laws prevent him from contesting in an election or holding a political position for five years after his release.

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