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Dr M: I've no plans to contest

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KUALA TERENGGANU: Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday said that he would not contest the Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat as an independent candidate.

He said he had resigned from politics in 2003 and "I'm not coming back".

Dr Mahathir said he doubted that any independent candidate would win in the Aug 26 by-election, and such a candidate would only succeed in splitting the votes for Umno or



Parti Keadilan Rakyat.

"At the moment I do not see anyone who can give Anwar a run for his money," Dr Ma-

hathir said after delivering a talk at a forum entitled "Challenges Faced by the Malays".

The former prime minister said Anwar would win the Permatang Pauh seat as the constituency was his stronghold.

But he added it would be interesting to analyse the margin of the votes.

A bigger margin for Anwar would not mean that he was more popular, but that Umno was less popular.

A smaller margin for the PKR adviser would meanwhile, show that Umno had made headway in the constituency.