

Deepak denies taking PI Bala to meet PM's brother
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Businessman Deepak Jaikishan has categorically denied having any part in a clandestine meeting purportedly held between private investigator P Balasubramaniam and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's brother Nazim Razak.

"That is a lie!" Deepak told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, in reference to the meeting that the self-exiled blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin has carried on Malaysia Today.

Raja Petra, also known as RPK, had alleged that the carpet dealer arranged the meeting between the private investigator, Nazim and Nazim's wife at a car showroom in a popular shopping mall in Petaling Jaya and was the "bagman" responsible for delivering the money to pay off Bala.

"I was never present at the time and location alleged by RPK. I did not engineer any meeting between Bala and the PM's brother," Deepak said.

However, he conceded that he came to know Bala through his brother and a mutual acquaintance he identified only as Suresh, a former police officer who also knew Bala.

His brother and Suresh, he said, were acquainted with Bala as they all used to frequent a "pure south Indian disco" in Bukit Bintang, called The Mandalay.

"I met Bala twice before. Once with Suresh and another time when he asked to see me through my brother and wanted to borrow money from me."

Deepak said he did not lend any money to the private investigator, who was facing difficulties at the time as his 'outing' in the Altantuya investigation and trial had made him too high profile and unemployable as a PI.

The businessman also admitted to knowing Nazim, but only in a business capacity as the latter is an architect and Deepak, who also does work in interior decorating, sometimes worked with Nazim.

He added that he knew about Nazim's wife, who was a former television personality, but had never met her till now.

'Too many Hindi movies'

"He (RPK) watches too many Hindi movies, that is his problem," said Deepak, adding that Bala on his part "has let his imagination get the better of him".

The businessman stressed that he was no bagman nor errand boy.

"Bagman? Nobody uses a bag in this day and age of the Internet. Things are done via money transfer... even if it is true (that I arranged the meeting), I am a busy man, why would I do such stuff? I have people who can do those things for me. I don't have to do things myself," Deepak said.

He reiterated his stand that his dealings with the prime minister and his family were purely business concerns and it did not mean he was connected to them, or was their 'bagman' or errand boy.

"I also do work for other cabinet ministers. Does that mean I am connected with them also?" asked Deepak.

The businessman also clarified the details and purpose of his RM600 million loan, which he said "is above board" and that he has been paying up on the loan as scheduled, with only RM200 million outstanding.

"Everything is proper... if I have political connections, can I not just ask them to write off the loan?" he joked.

'A joint-venture with Kuwait Finance House'

Deepak explained that the RM600 million loan he applied for and obtained was for an Islamic joint-venture property investment with the Kuwait Finance House and that it was guaranteed by his directors and shareholders, as well as the bank itself.

His property investment operations began in 2005, he said, and that he was only involved in investments in Malaysia and the region, not in any property speculation in the Middle East as some had suggested. He also denied having any property investment in Sarawak.

Deepak also denied having any direct involvement in government contracts, but admitted to being awarded the interior decoration job for the newly-built National Palace on Jalan Duta, saying he was given two of the eight parcels that were awarded.

However, the job was given to him by the main contractor, not by the government, and he added that his company had finished the job in the surau and was still working on the royal wing.

Deepak has of late given several interviews and press conferences to defend himself on a series of scathing articles posted by RPK on his website Malaysia Today.

Yesterday's press conference, he said, would be his last as he had no desire for the limelight.

"I only want to stay low profile, make money quietly, and lots of it... in this country you have to be low profile if you want to make money."

Asked for his age, Deepak refused to be specific, only saying that he is in his thirties, a bachelor and also "very available".