

Najib pressured Thai PM to stop Pornthip, claims PKR

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By Hazlan Zakaria

PKR is claiming that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had a hand in preventing Thai forensic expert Dr Pornthip Rojanasunan from performing the second autopsy on alleged police brutality victim C Sugumar.

"Najib had communicated with the Thai PM (Yingluck Shinawatra) regarding the second autopsy on Sugumar," alleged party vice-president N Surendran at a press conference in Petaling Jaya today.

"As a result of the communication, the Thai government decided that Pornthip (left) should not perform the autopsy in order not to undermine the relationship between the two countries."

The Thai expert had earlier agreed to conduct the second forensic examination of Sugumar's body after family members arranged for her involvement following their request to re-examine the body of the deceased, citing mistrust of the first autopsy.

However yesterday, she suddenly told them that she cannot be involved in the matter because of unspecified "personal reasons".

Surendren, who is also on the legal team representing the victim's family, said that the information on the allegations behind her withdrawal was made available to them in writing recently.

"We have been given these facts by an impeccable source and we have complete confidence in the veracity of the information," he claimed.

If true, said Surendren, the allegations point to a "behaviour of the worst and lowest kind" from Malaysia's highest leadership.

Pressed further about the identity of their source and whether they have documentary evidence of the serious claim, Surendren declined to divulge details, but reiterated that they have it all in writing and it is a document that they are prepared to adduce in a court of law.

Asked if Pornthip had received official orders from the Thai Justice Ministry which employs her not to be involved in the matter, Surendran said that the doctor is the best person to answer that question.

Malaysiakini has sent an email inquiry to Dr Pornthip and is awaiting her response on the matter.

Subang PKR MP R Sivarasa, who was also at the press conference and on the legal team for Sugumar's family, added that if true, Najib's actions smack of duplicity by appearing to offer "a false impression" to the parents and the Indian community with his dramatic request for the forensic report to be fast-tracked and sent to him personally.

While on the other hand, the PM then apparently went out of his way to apply diplomatic pressure on the PM of a foreign country to hamper ongoing attempts to get to the truth of the matter.

"We have two demands to the PM, first reveal the real reason behind Pornthip's withdrawal and secondly write to the Thai PM to remove his objection on her involvement," said the lawyer.

'Family taken for a ride'

Also present were Sugumar's mother, uncle and cousin.

His uncle, A Kuppusamy, decried the apparent duplicity by Najib and the way which he believes that the family has been taken for a ride.

"We thought the government will treat us fairly, but they deceive us. As if they have something to hide.

"You cannot give us back a life, but we want justice," concluded Kuppusamy.

He lamented that funeral rites for Sugumar have yet to be held despite his death over 21 days ago, pending the second autopsy.

According to the Hindu practice, a deceased body must be given the religious rites 16 days after his or her death, and the final rites after 30 days.

Sugumar was found dead last month after he was apprehended by police and locals after allegedly going on a rampage in Klang.

Police claimed that he died of a heart attack, though witnesses and family members blame the beating he allegedly took at the hands of police and others who participated in his arrest.

VIDEO| 2.08 mins

VIDEO| 1.18 mins

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