

PM expected to respond to Dr M on TV tonight

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By Aidila Razak

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is expected to respond to a slew of allegations thrown by former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight in a pre-recorded television interview.

The special question and answer with TV3 will be on "politics and economy", a source at the station said.

When contacted, an aide to the prime minister confirmed the interview will be aired tonight, at either 10pm or 11pm.

The TV station later said the interview conducted by TV host will be aired at 10pm.

Mahathir has in this month alone posted three scathing blog entries questioning Najib's credibility.

The country's longest serving prime minister asked who ordered the killing of Mongolian woman Altantuya Shaariibuu and questioned alleged mismanagement of Najib's brainchild 1Malaysia Development Bhd.

Najib was implicated in Altantuya's murder in 2006 after police commandos who served as his bodyguard at the time were convicted of the murder, while Najib's associate Abdul Razak Baginda was acquitted of abetment.

BN MPs, however, claimed that Najib is absolved of the murder because he took a religious oath (sumpah laknat) that he never knew Altantuya.

Najib, who is 1MDB board board of advisers chairperson, has thus far maintained his silence on Mahathir's vitriol, including the questioning of 1MDB's RM42 billion debt.

Public audit of 1MDB ordered

The PM earlier ordered a public audit of the Finance Ministry firm after a Sarawak Report expose alleging 1MDB banked in funds to Najib family-linked tycoon Jho Low's firm at the set-up of the 1MDB-PetroSaudi joint venture.

However, PetroSaudi said all the funds went to PetroSaudi entities while 1MDB said it has recovered the entire US\$1 billion (RM3.63 billion) it invested in now defunct the joint venture.

Low decried he was a victim of political crossfire.

Hours earlier, Najib attended a closed-door meeting with Umno Wanita at Seri Pacific

Hotel, adjacent to the Umno headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

Umno Wanita chief Shahrizat Abdul Jalil (on the left in picture) said the gathering was for the party wing to inform Najib of issues being raised on the social media.

"Today's programme is for Umno Wanita to inform the Umno president and prime minister about issues that we read about on social media, the traditional media and a few other issues that I believe everyone is aware of.

"We will also take the opportunity to ask the Umno president to continue responding to these questions and issues that have been raised the way he has already been doing," Shahrizat told a press conference shortly before Najib arrived.

She went on to rubbish claims that Najib had not responded to several issues that have been put forth to him.

"If we look at how things have progressed, he has answered them one by one and we ask the prime minister and Umno president to continue doing so," she said.

She did not specify what issues she was referring to but it is understood to be in response to several queries raised by Mahathir.

Among them are the whopping RM42 billion debt by government-owned 1Malaysia Development Bhd and Najib's links to flamboyant billionaire Jho Low.

On behalf of Umno Wanita, Shahrizat also pledged support for Najib and reiterated that according the party's ethics and convention, members must be loyal to their president.