

Dr M: If people not with me, why go on TV?

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Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad has quizzed the need for Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to explain himself on TV when it is just "one man" asking questions.

"Why do you need a television show to explain to the people?"

"If the people are not supporting me, or not with me, why want to tell them (about the issues he raised)?" he told Perak Today.

He was referring to the one-hour pre-recorded interview on TV3 last week in which Najib explained himself, addressing a range of issues said to be plaguing his administration.

In his trademark sardonic style, Mahathir said Najib shouldn't "care" about what the former premier has to say.

After all, he added, based on what the PM said, "the government is not committed to any one person but is committed to the people and the party".

Mahathir's recent spate of attacks include the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and the murder of Mongolian Altantuya Shaariibuu.

Need 'neutral people' to probe

He also called for a proper auditing by independent external parties into the 1MDB issue, which can dig deeper than an Auditor-General probe.

Neither should the investigation be in the form of a Royal Commission of Inquiry, which Mahathir labelled as "cowards".

"They (the Auditor-General) audit the books but they don't do investigative reporting. What we need is a commission of inquiry made up of people who have no personal interest.

"Not a royal commission; a royal commission is (full of) cowards. Even (when) I was called in before, it is a way for them (the government) to put me on the stand, but that's alright," Mahathir said.

Reiterating that "neutral people" were needed to do a comprehensive scrutiny of 1MDB, Mahathir questioned the role Jho Low (right) played in the issue.

"We need to have neutral people to do a thorough investigation on where the money went, who is handling the money, and who is this Jho Low.

"Why is he so important? Suddenly, he becomes so important when he has no position in

the government or civil service but he has so much of power," he added.

Mahathir also said under his administration, government-linked companies did not have to borrow as much money as during the current administration.

"I have never borrowed that amount of money. RM42 billion; that is a lot of money," he said referring to the recent loan 1MDB took from the government.

Meanwhile, commenting on his recent attacks on Najib, Mahathir said it was necessary but tough for him personally, as he looked up to Najib's father, Abdul Razak Hussein.

"It is difficult for me to say things against him (Najib) simply because I was the one who was involved in getting him to be prime minister and he is the son of Abdul Razak.

"Abdul Razak was my mentor; (it's) not easy for me to go against him but when you do something wrong, I have to comment and 1MDB is wrong," he said.

Mahathir added because he felt he owed it to Abdul Razak, he had had a hand in helping Najib progress in his career.