

## **Gag critics with confidence vote, PM told**

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**By Zikri Kamarulzaman**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak should call for a vote of confidence in Parliament to silence his critics once and for all, opined a political analyst today.

Penang Institute fellow Wong Chin Huat told Malaysiakini that it would be the easiest way for him to prove that he has the support of the majority to lead.

"One easy way for him to prove (that he has support) is to win a vote of confidence in Parliament. [...] once he wins a vote of confidence everyone will just shut up," he said when contacted.

The embattled prime minister yesterday launched his first public broadside against his most vocal critic - former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad - and vowed he will not be pushed out of office.

Speaking to a 40,000 strong crowd in Tawau, Sabah, Najib said he would only resign if the people and Umno rejected him.

The speech in Sabah raised eyebrows as Najib had at least three opportunities to speak his mind in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday.

Wong, however, noted that it was a strategic move.

"He goes to Sabah to show that the state is important because it has 25 Umno divisions and 14 Umno MPs.

"Whoever controls Sabah commands a strong show of support [...] since Sabah and Sarawak have proven to be king-makers after 2008," he said.

On the Tabung Haji scandal, which Najib also spoke about while in Borneo, the political analyst said Najib still has a chance.

"Tabung Haji could have been the last straw that broke the camel's back but as long as he can pacify the political warlords, he may still hold on (to power) for a while," he said.

### **Six vital steps**

The pilgrimage fund had recently come under heavy fire, including from Umno's top leadership, after it bought land belonging to 1Malaysia Development Berhad for RM188.5 million.

Najib, who is also 1MDB chairperson, has since advised Tabung Haji to resell the land.

The scandal has intensified calls for Najib to step down but Wong said replacing the current premier with someone else - such as his deputy Muhyiddin Yassin - would not solve any of the country's problems.

"We will have a temporary clean-up (of corruption) for one or two years and then everything will go back to where it was," he said.

He highlighted six steps that must be made in order to truly affect change in the country.

They are:

- Separate the job of prime minister from finance minister;
- Institute parliamentary reforms to grant more oversight;
- Separate the attorney-general from public prosecutors so the public prosecutors can have more discretion in charging;
- Replace the Official Secrets Act with a Freedom of Information Act and strengthen protection for whistle-blowers;
- Repeal draconian laws such as the Sedition Act and Prevention of Terrorism Act;
- Replace the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission with a more stricter Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission.