

Najib, live up to your 'Nothing2Hide' claim

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By Lim Kit Siang

MP SPEAKS It has really come a full circle – the longest-serving prime minister of Malaysia, who in his 22-year premiership had repeatedly denounced opposition leaders, even former leaders of the Umno/BN coalition government, most notably his one-time deputy and prime minister-designate Anwar Ibrahim, of disloyalty in using international forums to undermine their own country – is now the target of the very same accusation by the present administration!

In an open letter to The New York Times, Foreign Minister Anifah Aman made these same accusations against the “super patriot” Mahathir for attacking the country’s administration and political party, expressing regret at Mahathir’s action “to undermine his own country through the international media as part of a personal political vendetta”.

Anifah wrote: "It is irresponsible of any citizen, let alone a former prime minister, to spread lies and distort facts about state owned companies."

Anifah criticised Dr Mahathir's attack over the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), Umno and accusations against current Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

According to Bernama, the open letter Anifah (photo) sent to The New York Times alleged:

"Saying for example that RM42 billion is missing from 1MDB is to create public anxiety, when in fact these are audited debts backed by RM51 billion in assets. These reckless claims have affected market sentiments towards Malaysia.

"Furthermore, it is telling that he continues to mount his attacks rather than wait for the findings of the inquiry currently being undertaken by Malaysia’s central bank, the auditor-general and the Malaysian Parliament’s bipartisan Public Accounts Committee.

"This shows that Dr Mahathir is not interested in answers from the appropriate lawful authorities. Rather, he is just using 1MDB as an excuse to topple the serving prime minister."

Mahathir's accusation 'outrageous and false'

Describing Mahathir’s accusation against Najib as simply outrageous and entirely false, Anifah’s rejoinder to Mahathir’s allegation that Umno "has become a repository of patronage-seeking politicians" was the counter-accusation that "it is Dr Mahathir who had led the party for 22 years. It was he who, during his time, worked to cultivate the 'yes men' culture to entrench his position".

It was only on Wednesday that Mahathir had challenged Najib to a live telecast “Ask &

Answer All” public duel, saying he was prepared to answer questions about his 22 years as prime minister.

In a closed-door meeting with Umno-linked NGOs, Mahathir said Najib could ask him anything about his tenure as Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister, and that he could also ask Najib about anything.

“I want to ask Najib, to be on stage together with me in front of television (cameras). Najib can ask what I have done in the past, (claims) that I too had lost some money, he can ask (me) and I can ask him too.”

Yesterday, 1MDB president and group executive director Arul Kanda Kandasamy claimed that Mahathir had been presented with all the verified facts and details the former prime minister had previously requested, and that all documentary evidence Mahathir is now asking for have been “shared with independent auditors and Malaysia’s lawful authorities...(who) can then take action accordingly, per due process, and the laws of our country”.

'A chance to expose Mahathir's lies and distortions'

What gobbledygook, when all that Arul wanted to say is that 1MDB is not prepared to produce such documentary evidence after accusing Mahathir of dishonesty and bad faith.

Since Mahathir had challenged Najib to a live-telecast “Ask and Answer All” duel, this will be an excellent opportunity, not only for Najib live up to his “Nothing2Hide” claim on the RM42 billion 1MDB scandal, but also to prove Mahathir’s dishonesty and mala fide on the 1MDB issue by exposing Mahathir’s “lies and distortions of facts”, but also expose Mahathir’s heinous series of financial scandals costing the people RM100 billion under his 22-year premiership.

Why has Najib not yet jumped on the opportunity to “finish” Mahathir off for good? Who has more to hide – Najib or Mahathir?

Anifah is only half-right when he said in his Open Letter to The New York Times that most Malaysians would rather see Mahathir retire gracefully than continue to “damage the standing of his own country for personal political gain”.

Yes, most Malaysians would rather see Mahathir retire gracefully, but if he is prepared to put his shoulder to the wheel of a national campaign to end the rampant corruption, abuses of power, lack of accountability and good governance as illustrated by the 1MDB scandal (admittedly started under Mahathir’s years as prime minister) to reset Malaysia’s nation-building policies and future directions, Mahathir would be performing his last, final and most patriotic duty to the nation – and that will be welcomed by all patriotic Malaysians!

Najib should live up to his “Nothing2Hide” claim by accepting Mahathir’s challenge to a

live-telecast "Ask and Answer All" public duel.

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