

**Najib will survive, says ex-pol sec**  
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A former political secretary to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has said that Najib will likely stay in power despite increasing calls for his resignation.

"Politically, his image is of course greatly affected but he will be able to survive because either the opposition or those in the party against him don't have enough members of parliament to topple him," said Oh Ei Sun (photo), who was Najib's political secretary from 2009 to 2011, told CNBC yesterday.

Public opinion of the prime minister had plummeted following these 1MDB crisis, especially after the WSJ exposé alleging that US\$700 million had been transferred into Najib's personal bank accounts.

Social media research firm Politweet said its analysis of 600 Malaysians on Twitter from July 3 to July 7 had concluded that 85 percent showed negativity towards Najib.

Najib's chief critic and former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that in most countries, such allegations would have been enough to force the chief executive to resign and apologise.

"But in Malaysia, there are those who defend the leader without reason, just to safeguard their positions," wrote Mahathir on his blog.

**PM must do more**

Thus far, Najib has not denied WSJ's claim that US\$700 million ended up in his account, but stressed that he had never used 1MDB funds for personal gain.

Oh said that the matter had caused calls for his resignation to intensify, but he believed that it was not enough to oust the premier.

"If the allegations turn out to be true, Najib will have to clarify for what purpose. If they are not true, he will definitely be taking legal action against the WSJ.

"But he does need to do something more decisive than just denying the allegations for now," he said.

Najib had declared his intention to take legal action against WSJ. Thus far, his lawyers have sought clarification from WSJ's publisher Dow Jones, but has not formally initiated any suit.

**'PM can muddle through'**

The CNBC report also quoted Murray Hiebert, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and

International Studies, who concurred with Oh.

"If no real linkages are found to the prime minister during investigations, Najib can muddle through but it's really distracting the country from bigger issues like its economic slowdown," he said.

Meanwhile, a professor at the Southeast Asia Research Center of the City University of Hong Kong, William Case, pointed out that the investigation process is directly under Najib.

Not only that, Najib has a long history of surviving scandals, such as the 2006 high-profile murder case of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu.

There is also no obvious replacement for Najib even if he did resign, said Case.

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