

Time magazine advises Obama to avoid Najib
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US President Barack Obama should steer clear from the Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, an article published by Time magazine yesterday suggests.

Topping the five-item list of reasons for Obama to do so is the 1MDB scandal.

“But recently, all the news coming out of Malaysia is negative. After becoming embroiled in a corruption scandal, Najib yesterday sacked his deputy and Malaysia’s attorney-general in an apparent purge of critics.

“British Prime Minister David Cameron (photo) is facing a domestic backlash for pushing forward with a visit to Kuala Lumpur this week despite the snowballing controversy,” says the report that was published online yesterday.

The opinion piece was written by an associate editor of Time, Charlie Campbell, and was written as a list that summarised each of the five issues that ought to be reasons to avoid Najib.

Cameron is due to arrive in Kuala Lumpur tomorrow, while Obama is expected to attend the US-Asean Summit and East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur in late November.

Flip-flops over Najib’s promises

On the 1MDB issue, Time highlighted allegations that funds from the state investment company had been channelled into Najib’s personal accounts, and that Najib had threatened legal action against The Wall Street Journal for making the allegation.

“Even before the latest news, 1MDB was an embarrassment for Najib, who chaired the fund’s advisory board as debts of US\$11.6 billion (RM42 billion) were accrued.

“Such are the suspicions of malfeasance that former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, who ran the country from 1981 to 2003 and has long been considered Najib’s mentor, has repeatedly called for his protégé’s resignation over 1MDB’s alleged mishandling,” the Time article says.

Apart from the 1MDB scandal, the list also highlighted the allegedly politically-motivated incarceration of former opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, and the flip-flops over Najib’s promises to repeal the Sedition Act 1948 and laws that allow for detention without trial.

The article also noted that Umno had backed PAS’ attempts to implement hudud, and highlighted the murder of Mongolian national Altantuya Shaariibuu that had implicated Najib.

Najib had previously denied involvement in the murder, which occurred in 2002 when Najib was defence minister.

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