

How did you favour RM2.6b donor, Najib asked

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By Radzi Razak

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has been asked to tell the people the favour he returned to his "Middle East" donor for the RM 2.6 billion he received as the controversy surrounding the money mounts.

Opposition MP Tony Pua said it is unlikely a foreigner would fork out RM2.6 billion to help a political party contest in the local elections, without receiving anything in return.

Pua also quipped about Najib's infamous quote during the 2010 Sibujaya by-election campaign, "you help me, I help you", which he said proves that nothing is free for helping someone in an election.

"A huge sum of money from a Middle Eastern donor? Why would a Middle Eastern donor want to give RM 2.6 billion to a Malaysian political party to win the election? You, my friend, I give you RM 2.6 billion ringgit.

"To quote Najib, 'you help me, I help you'. So the Middle Eastern donor helped Najib with RM2.6 billion.

"It doesn't matter? Even if it ends up in Najib's private accounts? So, the question now is, how did Najib help this Middle Eastern person?" Pua told a crowd of some 1,000 people at the 'Where do we go from here' forum in at the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall last night.

Last month, US financial daily The Wall Street Journal in a report said RM2.6 billion had been deposited into Najib's private bank accounts.

On Monday, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said the RM2.6 billion purportedly deposited into Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's personal banks accounts came from a donation.

Pua said the reason Najib and his supporters sold the "donation" narrative is purely to hang on to power, as this could be the only way out for them not to face the law.

'People are already laughing at you'

"But this is very damaging. People are already laughing at you, but at least it will save your skin. Hold on to your power first, ride through this difficult time but as long as you survive, there is still a chance for you to win the next election," he said.

Pua also said if it was the DAP that received even a small amount of such a 'donation' from another country, it would be branded as a 'traitor' and selling out this country.

"You know, if DAP receives, don't talk even about RM26,000 from a Singapore agency. Finish. DAP will be finished.

"We will be considered a foreign-funded political party, we will be considered a traitor to the country because we received foreign funding to fight the local elections. But Umno boleh. Not RM26,000, not RM26 million but RM2.6 billion.

"Did the prime minister sell Malaysia out? That is the question we are asking," Pua said.

Another speaker, former Malaysian Bar president Ambiga Sreenevasan (photo), also voiced the same argument, saying the Umno government was known to accuse companies and NGOs, such as election watchdog Bersih and Suaram, of selling out and taking foreign funding.

"What is the agenda of this donor? If you recall, just before the last general election many civil societies like Bersih and Suaram were accused of taking funding from foreigners. Do you remember? For a pittance. They came out with front page articles," Ambiga said.

She said Najib's drastic measures to cling on to power have resulted in many laws being broken, which could also be labelled as corruption by MACC's definition.

The former Bersih co-chairperson said by using the "donation" excuse, Najib was confirming that he has done something wrong under various Malaysian laws.

"If it is donation, if it is true, it is more problematic. The MACC Act proves that political donation is a gratification. Section 50 of MACC Act says any gratification shall be presumed as corruption.

"If you have any sense, if you are trying to spin a story to cover yourself, please don't use the word 'donation'. Surely it will raise a red flag and gratification is presumed," Ambiga added.