

Ku Li: Speaker a hurdle in no-confidence vote

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Radzi Razak

The first hurdle for a vote of no confidence against Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is Dewan Rakyat Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia, Gua Musang MP Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah says.

He said Pandikar might bar the motion, even though it is the MPs' "right" to table a motion of no confidence against the prime minister.

"There are a few problems. First, it is our right to bring a motion of no confidence against the ruling government - but we are also told that the speaker can reject any motion that is not stated in the standing orders used inside the House," Tengku Razaleigh told a press conference in Putrajaya today.

He said this alongside a former rival and former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Umno deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin, Umno vice-president Shafie Apdal, former Kedah menteri besar Sanusi Junid and former MCA president Ong Tee Keat.

The press conference was called to condemn the arrest of 1MDB critic and former Umno division leader Khairuddin Abu Hassan and his lawyer Matthias Chang under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (Sosma).

The duo were charged today for attempting to sabotage the country's banking and financial system.

Muhyiddin is Pagoh MP, while Shafie is the MP for Semporna.

Mahathir said a vote of no confidence was the "only way" to oust Najib, but that the PM would do all he could to stop a vote of no-confidence against him.

"The only way now is a vote of no confidence... but of course, there are lots of things that people in power can do to stop it," Mahathir said.

Command confidence of majority

Opposition parties and NGOs such as Negaraku and Bersih also have mulled the idea of no confidence vote in Parliament.

Under the Article 43(2)(a) of the Federal Constitution, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong is supposed to appoint an MP "who is likely to command the confidence of the majority" of MPs as prime minister.

Mahathir (photo) said the move to remove the prime minister of the country is normal and

even an integral part of democracy, especially if the top man did something wrong.

"This should be a matter of concern to all MPs because they are in a position to remove the PM for wrongdoing.

"In all democratic countries, when a leader has lost the confidence of all the MPs, then he will have to step down and it is provided for in our constitution as well," Mahathir said.

Meanwhile, Umno veteran Sanusi Junid said the charge of toppling the prime minister was ridiculous, and questioned the need of using Sosma as the objective of all opposition parties in a democracy was to "topple" the government.

"When anyone tries to topple the PM, that is regarded as sabotage or something like terrorism but if you regard toppling PM as terrorism, then toppling the government is greater terrorism. Then you should go out and arrest all the opposition parties.

"It seems that here, toppling the government is not crime but toppling the PM is a crime," Sanusi said.

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