

**30,000 signatures for petition against Najib impressive, says Rafizi**  
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It's been a week since PKR parliamentarian Rafizi Ramli launched an online petition urging the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Malay rulers to re-open investigations against Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

But for a country which has 30 million people, the current 30,000 over signatories seem too small a number.

While Rafizi's critics may clap their hands in glee over this, the Pandan MP opines that obtaining 30,000 signatures for the petition was an impressive feat.

To him, although most people may feel angry about attorney-general Mohamed Apandi Ali's decision to clear Najib of any wrongdoing, at the same time, there is also a sense of helplessness and hopelessness.

"That's just natural and understandable given all the circumstances in the country. So many things have happened in the last six months that have shown how the executive power has interfered with every institution in this country.

"At the same time, things are very bad, economically. People are already feeling down, morale is very low. To them, maybe, signing a petition is not going to amount to anything," the lawmaker told Malaysiakini.

Therefore it was partly with this in mind that the PKR vice-president did not want to push too quickly in obtaining his target of one million signatories.

He said he is pacing the campaign and did not go all out in promoting the petition, as a matter of strategy.

"We want to actually build the momentum over time. It's not only about getting one million signatories," said the Pandan MP.

### **Aiming for 100K**

But come next week, Rafizi will be embarking on a more aggressive promotion by way of social media.

Therefore he believes that hitting 100,000 signatures next week would not be impossible.

And with the 100,000 signatures, Rafizi, as well as other groups he plans to have on board, will use them to get the file on the case reviewed by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption

Commission (MACC).

“The 100,000 signatures are proof of the legitimacy of our submission to the MACC. We want to engage the operational review panel of MACC for them to look at the file again and send it back to the attorney-general,” he said.

Although the attorney-general has decided not to prosecute Najib, the file will automatically go to the operational review panel which will in turn decide whether the attorney-general’s decision was fair or otherwise, said Rafizi.

“If they think it’s not fair, they will send it back to the attorney-general and he is duty-bound to proceed or the process will then go back to the same loop.

“With this petition, we have a chance of making this a non-stop loop. It will come to a point where the attorney-general cannot dismiss everything.”

Asked whether he will resort to drastic measures to obtain the target of one million signatures, Rafizi said he has not thought about taking a drastic plan B and instead said that he has “full confidence in Malaysians”.

“I have full confidence in Malaysians that they will be joining in because it takes some time for people to buy in.

“It took five years to convince Malaysians that we were right on the 1MDB issue,” he pointed out.

The petition - launched last Sunday - urges Malay rulers to not only re-open the probe but also to appoint an independent prosecutor to head the investigations.

The public are urged to like the '1 Juta Desak Buka Kembali Siasatan Terhadap Najib Razak' (1 million call for investigations against Najib Razak to be re-opened) Facebook page, and to sign the online petition.

Rafizi wants the case to be revived following a comment by Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir that the RM2.6 billion was an "investment" from a "private individual" and not a royal donation.

Najib has continuously denied any wrongdoing as well as allegations that he misused public funds.

### **Is signing effective?**

Meanwhile, when asked to comment on the effectiveness of petitions, Penang Institute fellow Wong Chin Huat said it all boils down to the “self-fulfilling prophecies” in politics.

“If you believe it’s going to work, it’s going to work, and vice versa. If there are enough people who believe it’s going to work, it’ll work.

“If there are enough people who believe, or even without believing that it’s going to happen but they want to make a difference, then a difference will be made,” said Wong.

Petitions, he said, seemed to be the answer to the lament by Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah) president Mohamad Sabu who ruefully decried the “cowardice” of Malaysians in ousting Najib.

“He (Mohamad) said it’s a matter of courage; no, it’s not. You don’t need courage to sign a petition.”

“But people still don’t do it (sign the petition) because they think that a change is not going to happen or because they are unsure whether the outcome is really what they are looking for.

“It’s not about being a coward. It’s a question of whether we have good motivation,” Wong added.

And once there is impetus, even if the first attempt doesn’t work, the second will, he said.

But the most pertinent question that needs to be resolved, said Wong, is the alternative, on who would lead in place of Najib and Umno.

“There’s no answer on who will replace Najib and who will replace Umno as the government; that’s the reason why many people are not making a decision,” said Wong.