Dr M urges rulers pressure Najib out, says late Johor sultan his friend
MalaysiaKini.com
Mar 27th, 2016

CONGRESS Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has refuted claims that government-palace ties are better under Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak compared to when Mahathir was PM for 22 years.

In fact, Mahathir said, one of his best friends was the late Sultan Iskandar Ismail of Johor.

The sultan's reported assault of a hockey coach in 1992 led to a constitutional crisis, with the government led by then-PM Mahathir moving to curb royal powers.

"One of my best friends was the late sultan of Johor and I changed the law with regard to assault on any sultan, on anybody. But he was my friend until the last (breath)," Mahathir told reporters today.

He said this at a press conference after the People's Congress in Shah Alam.

In his speech earlier, he said he hopes the royals would heed the people and intervene in urging for Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's resignation.

He recalled how the sultans boycotted the swearing-in of the British governor-general of the Malayan Union, following protests by the people.

This led to the scrapping of the Malayan Union.

"So if the rulers were to urge for it, there's a possibility that the prime minister will be removed.

"If millions ask for Najib to be removed, the rulers would have to accept this.

"If we show the rulers how much the rakyat want Najib to be removed, I believe that even though the rulers don't have the power enshrined under the constitution, they will make efforts to remove him," he said.

Rulers interested in the topic

In the press conference later, Mahathir pointed out how the rulers, too, seemed to be interested on the topic as they made a rare decree for the government to resolve the 1MDB issue.

However, the ex-premier acknowleged that the rulers cannot make Najib resign or forcibly replace him with someone else, as there is no provision for this in the federal constitution.

"They can pressure," he said.

The 1992 incident came to light again last week after Sultan Iskandar's grandson, Johor crown prince Tunku Ismail Idris recalled how members of the palace were humiliated during that period and reminded the government not to repeat such acts.

The remark by the crown prince was speculated to be a signal that the palace was backing Najib.

However, when asked where he stood in the battle between ex-PM and PM, Tunku Ismail said: "Johor."

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/335482