

Najib flays Dr M, says ex-PM driven by personal agenda
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said the actions of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is trying to interfere in the country's administration, were because the former prime minister still wanted to be in control.

Najib said Mahathir was trying this because he had his own agenda including perhaps wanting his son in a top leadership position or it could be because some of his projects had not materialised.

"Dr Mahathir forgets that when he was prime minister, he himself refused to allow anyone to interfere in his administration and that with him, it was 'do it my way or be on your way'," he said in a pre-recorded interview that was broadcast on I-News in Jakarta last night.

Najib said Mahathir might have forgotten that he was his loyal supporter for 22 years and firmly stood behind the former party (Umno) president when almost half the party members no longer supported his leadership.

He said, now as the prime minister given the mandate, he determined national policies in a more open manner and made decisions after consultations with other leaders in the government and applied the same principle in leading the party (Umno).

"When I took over as prime minister, I should be entrusted to govern the country. I accept opinions, but I do not want to set aside the principle that I am the legitimate prime minister and I will continue to lead according to my best judgement for the good of the country and people," he said.

Najib said that a leader must have principles and dignity because they will be evaluated and judged by the legacy they leave behind.

"This means, if we have nothing left, at least we still have self-respect, so if we sacrifice our principles, history will judge us," he said.

The prime minister said that politics in Malaysia was stable, as the law stipulated that the government could not be changed through street demonstrations, although the people have been given the freedom of expression.

"The fact is there is political stability in Malaysia, what they saw (street demonstrations) I deem noise level, because to make a change (in the leadership) in Malaysia, it must be subject to the (federal) constitution, whereby whoever holds the majority in Parliament may set up the government," he said.

Najib said in Malaysia, whoever was the president of the largest party (Umno) in Parliament would become the prime minister, and no one could change the government through street protests.

"We do not want street demonstrations to become 'democracy', and people can make a difference by choosing a government every five years.

"We must have a sense of responsibility with rational thinking that we should be guided by the democratic 'rule of law', which is based on the principles of democracy where the citizens have the right to choose the government," he said.

The Umno president said the vast experience he had garnered during his 40 years in politics have been advantageous to him in receiving support from his colleagues and companions.

- *Bernama*