

Proposal for Najib to helm FAM gets red card

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is not a suitable candidate to helm the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM), according to Malaysian coaches' organization president B Sathianathan.

He said this is because the prime minister is preoccupied with administrating the country.

"In this era, football is fast-paced like the Internet. The prime minister is too busy with other commitments such as managing the country, economy and politics.

"It was possible during the time of (former premier) Tunku Abdul Rahman," he told *Malaysiakini*.

Yesterday, it was reported that former FAM vice-president Raja Ahmad Zainuddin Raja Omar had suggested Najib, who is a diehard Manchester United fan, as the new FAM leader.

Sathianathan said developing football in this era required high-level commitment and the FAM president should be someone capable of focusing solely on his tasks.

Swift decisions needed

He pointed out how the president would need to make swift decisions during meetings, which required his presence.

"Can PM do this? I prefer someone who can focus. It is difficult for politicians (to head FAM).

"These days, football demands quick decisions. If we wait for PM to be free to attend a meeting and make a decision two or three months later... '*habislah*,'" he added.

The former national coach pointed out that in developed countries, football associations are headed by those who can provide full concentration with regard to their responsibilities.

"There are many levels in football now. A president must always be in the office, be focused to make all kinds of decisions, including at the international level.

"I don't see how a person as busy as the prime minister can be FAM president. We don't want someone to be president, and delegate his work to another person," he added.

FAM's current president Pahang Crown Prince Tengku Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah is set to vacate the post next year when the association holds its election.

Apart from Najib, others suggested for the post include Johor Crown Prince Tengku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim, AirAsia chief executive officer Tony Fernandes and Kelantan Football Association president Annuar Musa.

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