

What different treatment? Najib refutes Dr M's 'VIP criminal' claim

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Pekan MP Najib Razak has refuted former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad's claims that he was given special treatment which led to a Court of Appeal's decision to temporarily return his passport.

"What different treatment? I applied through the court. I did not ask it from the government," Najib said in a Facebook post.

He was responding to Mahathir's labelling of him as Malaysia's "first VIP criminal" for the alleged special treatment, and that the return of his international passport was an "extraordinary case".

Mahathir claimed Najib was treated differently from others who were charged and convicted, as the latter has so far been spared from prison and still retained escort services.

The High Court in Kuala Lumpur last year sentenced Najib to 12 years in jail and

RM210 million fine after being found guilty of corruption, criminal breach of trust and laundering money belonging to SRC International Sdn Bhd.

The High Court also allowed for a stay of execution on both the jail term and fine, pending an ongoing appeal. The Court of Appeal has seized Najib's passport while the trial is ongoing.

Unanimous decision

Taking to Facebook, Najib also took a swipe at Mahathir as he insisted that the passport request was only made to be with his daughter who will be giving birth in Singapore.

"The ones who allowed my application for travel to Singapore is the Court of Appeal with a unanimous decision from the three judges.

"That's through the court process. It wasn't the government's permission," he said.

"If Atok (Mahathir) is unhappy, go ahead and attack the experienced judges. Call a press conference to attack them, we want to see," said Najib.

Najib also reminded Mahathir of the alleged "different treatment" he received in court during the latter's tenure as prime minister, alluding to the change of judges presiding over his SRC International trial at the High Court.

In July 2018, it was reported that the High Court judge in Kuala Lumpur, Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali, would take over the hearing of Najib's case from judge Mohd Sofian Abd Razak.

Prior to presiding over the SRC criminal case, Nazlan dealt with civil cases, rather than criminal cases, up until March 1 this year when he was transferred back to the civil bench.

Najib said the initial change of judge had led to 307 mistakes that he submitted in his grounds of appeal from the SRC charges.

"This was the different treatment towards me while Atok was the seventh prime minister. What is Atok's comment about this different treatment?" asked Najib.

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