

Mahathir admits embarrassment but to keep highlighting Najib's name

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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has admitted that he was ashamed to have to "reprimand" his rival Najib Abdul Razak who has been embroiled in allegations of misappropriation of state funds.

However, Mahathir said he "had to" constantly bring up the former sixth prime minister to ensure Najib does not return to power.

"Actually, I am very ashamed of Najib's name, for he has shamed the country, race and religion. Unfortunately, he himself is not ashamed and even pretends as if he was persecuted, including by me.

"He needs to be blocked because if he returns to power, this means the country will be ruled and governed by a kleptocracy and court cluster to further rob and plunder the nation.

"There is no personal revenge on my part against Najib," Mahathir said in his second letter to Johor voters.

On Feb 15, Mahathir, who is also Pejuang chairperson, reiterated the warning of his former protege Muhyiddin Yassin that the Johor state election was aimed at further strengthening the "court cluster" in Umno.

This is after Umno vice-president Khaled Nordin was seen distancing the group - which got such a nickname for having a corruption case in court - from Johor Umno.

In an open letter to Johor voters on Feb 15, Mahathir said the 'court cluster' would be strengthened despite not contesting directly.

"Some voters said that the court cluster and kleptocracy groups are not contesting in the Johor state election.

"It is true, but those who contest on Umno and BN tickets will give strength to the court cluster and kleptocracy," Mahathir had said.

In his second letter, Mahathir said he initially supported Najib's leadership because he was confident of his ability and was also indebted to the late Abdul

Razak Hussein for elevating his political career.

"Unfortunately, Najib is not like his father, a dignified nationalist fighter. Najib stole the country's money with the help of Low Taek Jho.

"I will continue to denigrate Najib or anyone who tries to damage the country and deceive the people," he added.

Mahathir himself served two separate terms as prime minister.

The latter term ended following the Sheraton Move which was triggered after Mahathir attempted to replace the Pakatan Harapan government under which he was obligated to hand over power to PKR president Anwar Ibrahim with a Mahathir-led unity government that would allow him to serve a full five-year term.

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