

PM: Najib may appeal to new Agong if dissatisfied

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Najib Abdul Razak may appeal to Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar if he is dissatisfied with his reduced sentence granted by the Pardons Board.

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said the process of granting a pardon is beyond the prerogative of the prime minister and the government.

“I respect the decision of the then King. Now we have a new King. Whatever one feels - of course, it is very political - some support, some don’t.

“But they cannot ignore the fact that you must respect the rights of everyone convicted to appeal to the Pardons Board.

“Now the Pardons Board has made a decision. If one is satisfied, then it is fair. If it does not satisfy, he or she still has the avenue to appeal at a later stage,” Anwar said in an interview with Al Jazeera tonight.

The Pardons Board today announced that Najib’s jail sentence will be slashed

from 12 years to six, meaning the former prime minister would be released as early as Aug 23, 2028.

The board also slashed the fine slapped on the former Umno president from RM210 million to RM50 million.

However, failure to pay the fine would add another year to Najib's prison sentence, where he will only be released on Aug 23, 2029.

This decision made by the Pardons Board was one of the last acts of Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, whose term ended on Tuesday (Jan 30).

Najib's family has expressed disappointment over the decision to not grant the former prime minister a full pardon and immediate release from prison.

Speaking on the Pardons Board's decision, Anwar (above) said all considerations were taken into account before Sultan Abdullah made his decision.

"I used to sit on the Pardons Board as a minister in charge of Kuala Lumpur, and now it's (ministership is) being held by someone else.

"But of course, the King as a constitutional monarch, consults the attorney-general, the prime minister and more. He is of course the bastion to uphold the

Constitution and the rule of law.

“And all of the considerations were taken into account and then the King, after listening to the board, finally decided to reduce the sentence by 50 percent which means (Najib will be released) in 2028,” he said.

Pardons Board members

All states in Malaysia have their own Pardons Board headed by their sultans - or governors for Penang, Malacca, Sabah, and Sarawak.

According to Articles 42(5) and 42(11) of the Federal Constitution, the Pardons Board for the Federal Territories comprises the attorney-general, federal territories minister, and no more than three other members appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Based on appointments announced through the federal gazette, there are four names whose appointments were valid at the time Najib’s pardon was considered.

This means at least one of those persons is no longer a member due to resignations and other factors that may nullify an appointment, which is not announced through the gazette.

These royal appointees are Prasad Sandosham Abraham, Paramasivam Arunasalam, Darussalam Budin, and Zaharah Ibrahim.

According to former attorney-general Tommy Thomas, among the criteria for a pardon include when a prisoner has served one-third of their jail sentence before applying and that the prisoner cannot have other pending criminal cases.

Najib is currently on trial for other cases including four counts of abuse of power and 21 counts of money laundering involving RM2.27 billion from 1MDB.

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