



Nik Sapeia arriving in court with his counsel Mohd Nor (left)

# Nik Sapeia charged with causing hurt

KOTA BARU: Businessman Datuk Nik Sapeia Nik Yusof was charged yesterday over an incident in which former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was hit by pepper spray.

He was charged with voluntarily causing hurt with a dangerous substance through the use of a spraying instrument.

Apart from Dr Mahathir, Nik Sapeia was alleged to have caused hurt to three others at the Sultan Ismail Petra airport about 11am on July 28.

Nik Sapeia, 53, arrived an hour before the magistrate's court closed for the day.

He was accompanied by his wife, Dr Sudani Yahya, son Nik Fatani and daughter Marina.

As journalists, supporters and Special Branch policemen packed the court's small public gallery, the accused took a seat in the dock and was seen calmly reciting prayers while waiting for proceedings to begin.

Nik Sapeia, represented by Zainal Abidin Mustaffa and Ilias Md Nor, was charged before magistrate Tengku Amalin A'ishah Putri Sultan Ismail Petra.

Besides hurting Dr Mahathir, 81, he was also charged separately with hurting former Pasir Mas Umno leader Datuk Ibrahim Ali, 55, Mohd Nasir Muda, 45, and

Suberi Sahidan, 48, at the same time and place.

He pleaded not guilty to all charges.

If convicted, the former Kuala Krai Umno division faces a maximum jail term of three years, whipping, a fine or any of the above.

It is understood that the four hurt were in the same vehicle when they were hit by the pepper spray.

Deputy public prosecutor Shahidani Abdul Aziz applied for RM10,000 bail. However, Zainal Abidin objected to this, suggesting RM7,000 bail as his client was facing a summons charge.

Tengku Amalin A'ishah Putri set bail at RM8,500, which was posted by Nik Fatani, pending mention on Nov 22.

Nik Sapeia and his family were rushed out of the court complex about 5pm in a black MPV.

Nik Sapeia was detained on the eve of July 28, some 10 hours after Dr Mahathir was hit by a gust of pepper spray when he arrived at the airport.

Dr Mahathir was addressing a crowd of supporters from the sunroof of a four-wheel drive when the incident occurred.

Nik Sapeia was released from police custody three days after he was detained.