

# Zaid urges PM to free Najib as RM42m is 'small change'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former law minister Datuk Mohd Zaid Ibrahim has urged the prime minister to free Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who is serving a 12-year jail sentence for misappropriating RM42 million of SRC International Sdn Bhd funds.

He said under the scheme of things, the RM42 million Najib had been jailed for was just “small change”, and nobody would fault Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim if Najib is pardoned.

In his latest Twitter post, Zaid said Anwar need not worry about forgiving Najib as the latter was needed to help Umno win the coming state elections.

His twitter post read: “Dear PM, you have to change your mind about Najib — for the sake of the people. Let him free. This coming election, Madani needs to win; you need to be PM for a few more years. Umno is weak; only Najib will help you win.

“Sure, he was found guilty, but in the scheme of things, 42 mil is a small change. After all, from

now on corruption is a thing of the past; under your strict and clean leadership, no one can say you are soft on corruption by pardoning him.”

The post had garnered over 92,000 views with mixed responses, including some who questioned Zaid's logic in making his arguments.

Among the more interesting comments included one from Amer Al-Jeffrey who posted in Malay saying “*Isap apa ni woi*” (what are you smoking?) and another from Artemis.P who wrote: “*Orang curi tin sardin pun kena jail* (even those who steal sardine cans are jailed)”.

Zaid also took the matter to his Facebook page, sharing a clip of him providing further elaboration on his earlier tweet.

He argued that Najib's hand in the government would play a crucial role in advancing the government's Madani agenda.

He also posed a question, asking whether it was more critical for the Madani government to



Datuk Mohd Zaid Ibrahim

claim election victories or to keep Najib behind bars.

“If Madani wants to be established in this country, it needs time. It's only been seven months, but we want Madani for seven years. Only then we will understand what is Madani, I also want to see it succeed. It's like that old saying, we have to do what's necessary,” he added.

Zaid also expressed his hope that Anwar would be open to rethinking his stance on Najib, arguing the potential benefits of “flip-flopping” on some issues.

To back his argument, Zaid cited the government's decision to study a proposal to revive the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High-Speed Rail (HSR) project as an example of “beneficial” flip-flopping.

He explained that initially, the Umno government had agreed to proceed with the project, followed by the Pakatan Harapan government's intention to continue with it, only to eventually cancel it.

“This is the sort of flip-flopping that benefits the people. I agree to this. Flip-flopping on Najib's issue is also something I agree on,” he added.

The post generated 187 reactions and 81 comments from netizens, with mixed opinions.

One notable comment was from user Zainal Ali, who disagreed with Zaid: “Sorry, Datuk.

Enough with the nonsense. I'm even ashamed to comment on this.”

Another netizen, Mimi Marina Jaafar, suggested that “PMX” (Anwar) should consider Zaid's suggestion seriously.

Najib, 70, was jailed 12 years and fined RM210 million after he was found guilty by the Kuala Lumpur High Court on July 28, 2020, of three counts of criminal breach of trust and three counts of money laundering of RM42 million of SRC funds.

He was also convicted of abusing his power with regard to the RM4 billion Retirement Fund Inc (KWAP) loan, which the cabinet approved via a government guarantee in two meetings that he chaired in August 2011 and March 2012.

A three-member Court of Appeal upheld the conviction and sentence on Dec 8, 2021, and this was further confirmed by a five-member Federal Court bench led by Chief Justice Tun Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat on Aug 23.