

Karpal: Najib should not have attended CJ's tea party
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PETALING JAYA (Sept 11, 2011): DAP chairman Karpal Singh today insisted that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak's tea party with former Chief Justice Tun Zaki Azmi last week implied an attempt to interfere in the nation's judiciary system.

The tea party, held on the sidelines of the annual Conference of Judges in Putrajaya's Palace of Justice, (PoJ) was also attended by 130 judges.

Former Bar Council president Ragunath Kesavan had reportedly denounced the meeting as potentially "blurring the lines between the separate branches of government."

His claim had been refuted by Zaki and several other senior lawyers, including Datuk Seri Shafee Abdullah who yesterday pointed out that the nation's past prime ministers had all attended functions hosted by the judiciary.

"Najib knows his responsibilities and boundaries of propriety," said Shafee in defence of the prime minister.

Karpal, in response to Shafee however, questioned Najib's attendance at the gathering as he has been named as one of the defence witnesses in the ongoing Pakatan Rakyat de-facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's sodomy trial.

"The first four prime ministers are not on record to have a subpoena issued by the High Court for their attendance at the behest of the defence without any attempt being made to set aside those subpoena," he said in a statement.

Karpal added, Anwar's ongoing trial is an internationally high profile case, and as such, Najib's presence was "ill-advised" and should have been avoided.

Najib himself on Wednesday said he agreed to make the working visit to the PoJ upon Zaki's invite as it was not the first time and there have been precedence before.

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