

## **Mahathir speculates about Najib's arrest abroad**

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**By FMT Reporters**

**At a meeting with Malay NGO, former premier says it's only a possibility if there is any evidence of money-laundering**

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has kept up the pressure in his campaign to force Prime Minister Najib Razak out of office by speculating about the possibility of Najib being arrested if he went abroad – if foreign countries made headway in any investigations into alleged money-laundering.

In a video clip of his meeting with a Malay NGO group at a restaurant here on Friday, Mahathir is seen raising the possibility of Najib's arrest – but also stating that “that is only a possibility based on the current international law”.

Former Batu Kawan Umno division leader Khairuddin Abu Hassan is reported to have handed over documents to Swiss authorities, urging an investigation into the government investment arm 1Malaysia Development Bhd. News reports on 1MDB's investments have revealed a chain of transactions involving use of accounts in offshore tax havens and Swiss banks.

The news reports gave rise to speculation about possible offences under money-laundering laws, as the money flows involved use of multiple bank accounts.

At the restaurant meeting, Mahathir said domestic laws applied to crimes which were committed locally, but if a crime had some connection with a foreign country, that nation has power (to investigate and prosecute).

He gave the example of an arrest warrant on Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir issued by the International Criminal Court to stand trial on various charges such as genocide.

Mahathir said if countries such as Switzerland, Britain and the United States believed that Najib had been involved in money laundering, they could enlist Interpol to arrest him.

Najib has come under intense criticism over the financial scandals surrounding state investment vehicle 1Malaysia Development Berhad and for receiving RM2.6 billion in political donations.

Khairuddin is also reported to have made reports with authorities in Singapore, Hong Kong, Britain and France, and was purportedly to meet officials of the US Federal Bureau of Investigations.

Khairuddin was arrested on Friday evening and is being held in remand for six days for questioning under provisions relating to activities detrimental to parliamentary democracy and a purported attempt to “topple” the government.

Earlier in the day Immigration officials had prevented him from leaving on a flight to London at 10am. In an apparent reference to the Immigration action, Mahathir

speculated that Najib would “have to remain here, like how he withdrew the passports of some people and barred them from going overseas” and that he might face arrest if he went abroad.

However, none of the countries except Switzerland has confirmed any investigation into 1MDB or specifically about Najib as a result of the reports purportedly filed.

Najib enjoys diplomatic immunity when he travels abroad on official business as head of government.

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