

**Najib has audience with Johor Sultan**  
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**By FMT Reporters**

**After first meeting since Muhyiddin dropped from Cabinet, Sultan and PM tour coastline projects**

JOHOR BARU: The prime minister, Najib Razak, had an audience with the Sultan of Johor today, in their first meeting since Najib dismissed his deputy, Muhyiddin Yassin, and after several bouts of veiled criticism from the royal house.

Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar received Najib at Istana Bukit Serene for an hour and the two later had lunch at Danga Bay. They viewed the development projects along the Johor Baru coastline, especially those by China developer Country Garden Holdings, according to Star Online.

Country Garden is developing 9,000 condominium flats, a shopping centre and commercial property on a 23-hectare seafront site at Danga Bay which was bought for RM900 million earlier this year.

It is also involved in the massive Forest City project which entails land reclamation in the Johor Straits of about 2,000-hectares in a development that is estimated to have a commercial value of RM900 billion over its life span.

The Johor royal family is reported to have interests in the Forest City project as well as two other small projects nearby.

In recent months, Najib and his wife Rosmah Mansor, were the subjects of veiled criticism from the royal family.

The Sultan's heir, Tunku Ismail, the Tunku Mahkota, was embroiled in a controversial public exchange of words with cabinet minister Nazri Aziz earlier this year when the prince made a criticism of corruption in national leadership, which was interpreted to be an attack on Najib.

The Sultan's consort, Raja Zarith Sofia, was also reported to have made a remark in an online posting that was seen to be a veiled attack on Rosmah after the prime minister's wife had been quoted about the high cost of living, using her hairdresser's charges as an example.

After Najib dropped Muhyiddin from the Cabinet, the Sultan received the former deputy prime minister in an audience at Istana Bukit Serene and a group photograph was published at the Johor football team's Facebook page showing Muhyiddin and wife with the royal couple and Johor menteri besar Khaled Nordin and Tunku Ismail.

Last week, the Sultan was widely quoted for taking a firm stand against racism. He said: "There is no place for hatred and racism here in Johor Darul Ta'zim. If anyone who want to practise hatred and racism in Johor Darul Ta'zim, the home of the Malays, Chinese and Indians – Bangsa Johor, please leave Johor immediately. That is an order!"

His remarks came at a time when the Red Shirt rally, endorsed by Umno, was taking place in Kuala Lumpur at which racial and inflammatory remarks were made. However, Najib has defended the rally and denied there was any racism involved.

Najib was expected to attend an Umno event in Muar later today.

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