

BN backbenchers says Najib will answer Dr Mahathir
The Malaysian Insider
April 6, 2015
By Mohd Farhan Darwis

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak will answer the criticism of his administration hurled by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition's Backbenchers Club (BNBBC) chairman Tan Sri Shahrir Samad.

He said the criticism by Dr Mahathir, the longest serving premier in the country, was more personal and the club had suggested that Najib answer them.

"He will answer. We have advised that the time has come for him to answer," he told a press conference at parliament today.

The Johor Baru MP said Dr Mahathir's criticism was now more open and more personal against Najib.

"This time it is open. If Dr Mahathir said he loved the party, we also love the party, but we don't think this is the way," Shahrir said.

"Sometimes we cannot pretend not to know. I believe Najib will answer the criticism," Shahrir said.

Also present at the press conference were Kinabatangan MP Datuk Bung Mokhtar Radin, Lenggong MP Datuk Shamsul Anuar Nasarah, Parit Sulong MP Datuk Noraini Ahmad, Baling MP Datuk Azeez Rahim, and several other BN lawmakers.

The BNBBC is the latest to ask Najib to reply to questions raised by Dr Mahathir.

On Saturday, Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar said Putrajaya needed to answer all the questions raised by Dr Mahathir, including about strategic investment company 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), the purchase of a new jet by the government, and the murder of Mongolian interpreter Altantuya Shaariibuu, to prevent the situation from escalating.

The Youth and Sports Minister said the views of the statesman should not be ignored because what he raised has received a lot of attention.

"We have to understand what he wrote because he is a former prime minister. We cannot ignore it. Pretending not to be aware of it is not an option. If we ignore this, it will worsen. We need to resolve this.

"What Dr Mahathir raised, we have to answer and although we feel that the answers had been given, we have to answer them again," he reportedly said.

Last Thursday, Dr Mahathir listed down in a blog posting various allegations made against Najib and noted that none had been answered adequately.

Dr Mahathir said these included the murder of Altantuya and the claims made by one of her convicted murderers, former police commando Sirul Azhar Umar, who was a former bodyguard of Najib's.

Noting Sirul's claim that he had been "under orders" to kill Altantuya, Dr Mahathir said such an allegation ought to be investigated because Sirul had worked for Najib.

Dr Mahathir also delved into the problems surrounding 1MDB, questioning the need for Putrajaya to give it a standby credit facility of almost RM1billion, the fund's purchase of government land and its dubious deal with the little-known oil company, PetroSaudi International.

He then questioned the source of funds for Najib's stepson, Riza Aziz, to purchase luxury properties in New York through businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low.

He also mentioned the new private jet purchased for Najib, describing it as a "waste" since the government already had other jets.

"There are many other allegations and questions against 1MDB, set up by Datuk Seri Najib and controlled by him as adviser, that have not been answered, other than to deny and call the allegations lies.

"The reports in New York and London newspapers are extremely embarrassing for the country," Dr Mahathir added, referring to foreign media reports on 1MDB and Low. – April 6, 2015.

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