

Mandate to lead is from the people, belongs to no one but me, says Najib
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Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak today reiterated that he would not relinquish power, saying his mandate was from the people and did not belong to any individual.

In a veiled reference, he also hit out at an "eminent" person in reminding the public that his mandate belonged to him as he was elected.

"It is the people who elected me, and I am proud and humbled to bear that mandate – which is the people's to give and take away. It does not belong to any individual, however eminent," Najib wrote on his Facebook page today.

The prime minister has been under severe pressure since last year from retired statesman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who called for his resignation and took him to task over state investment firm 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

Dr Mahathir's criticism has divided Umno, the ruling Malay party which Najib heads, and spurred talk of alliances and plots to seek a no-confidence vote against the prime minister.

Najib today said it was his duty to make decisions for all Malaysians and added that no one should try to stop him from carrying out his mandate.

"As prime minister, it is my responsibility to make the right decisions for all Malaysians. More than that, it is my duty. It is a sacred trust, and no one should attempt to interfere with or hijack that obligation to lead," he said.

Dr Mahathir has been critical of Najib's cash handout policy under the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) scheme, as well as several of his other policies.

But Najib has been hit hardest by allegations concerning 1MDB, which is his brainchild, and has debts of RM42 billion incurred in six years of operations.

He is also chairman of 1MDB's advisory board.

The prime minister is also embroiled in another scandal of US\$700 million (RM2.6 billion), which were put in his accounts, a large portion of it was before the general election in 2013.

The money has been confirmed as a political donation from a Middle Eastern country, but what it was used for has not been confirmed.

Dr Mahathir's criticism of Najib became even harsher recently after the July 28 Cabinet reshuffle, which saw the removal of Umno ministers critical of 1MDB, and

moves that stymied various investigations into the state investment firm's alleged wrongdoing.

These included the sudden change of Attorney-General, suspension of a parliamentary probe into 1MDB's accounts, and the targeting of anti-graft investigators for allegedly leaking official information on a probe into 1MDB.

Dr Mahathir recently predicted a grim future for Malaysia, saying "democracy is dead" under Najib and accusing him of stealing the government. – August 21, 2015.

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