

**Mahathir: Najib trying to save himself with Chinese money**  
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**PPBM chairman says this is the only reason why Prime Minister Najib Razak is forging closer ties with China.**

PETALING JAYA: Dr Mahathir Mohamad is showing no sign of easing off on his criticism of Prime Minister Najib Razak.

Today, in a live interview on Facebook, he said the country's leader was trying to "save" himself by awarding huge contracts to China.

Malaysia's longest serving prime minister made this claim when asked for his take on why Najib was forging closer ties with China and whether there was an ulterior motive behind the move.

"The prime minister sees China as being rich, he wants Chinese money, how do you get Chinese money? By awarding huge contracts to China," he said, adding this was why Najib "purchased" trains from China.

"(But) we can't pay. When he needs to borrow money, he sells off land to China, because he (Najib) has no money to pay the debts, because we owe so much."

Mahathir, who has become Najib's fiercest critic in recent times, said Najib was able to remain silent and delay the repayment of debts to Malaysian institutions such as the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Retirement Fund Incorporated (KWAP) and Lembaga Tabung Haji (TH) but could not do the same with loans taken from banks and international financial institutions.

He said if these debts weren't settled, action would be taken against Malaysia, including the possibility of declaring the country bankrupt.

"When that happens, people will know what he (Najib) has done, so he is trying to prevent that. If he falls in the election (GE14), he will face a lot of problems."

Najib's political opponents have alleged that recent Chinese investments in Malaysia are nothing other than a "bailout" following the 1Malaysia Development Berhad fiasco.

Many have also alleged that the deals with China would ultimately affect Malaysia's sovereignty due to the nature of the investments.

Mahathir himself has criticised Chinese projects in Malaysia, including the Forest City project in Johor, arguing that when he was prime minister, investors were limited to setting-up manufacturing facilities in Malaysia. He said that under Najib's leadership, Chinese investments had involved property and infrastructure projects on vast tracts of land.

Najib, however, has hit back at his critics, saying that investments from China were no different from those taken from Europe, Japan and South Korea, taking into account the phenomenon of the inter-connected world Malaysia operated in today, as well as globalization.

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