

Now, Najip with a 'p' says sorry to Najib with a 'b'
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A Singapore channel has apologised 'unreservedly' for comments made by participants of a weekly comedy show.

PETALING JAYA: Singapore broadcasting group Mediacorp today apologised to Najib Razak for airing a comedy show in which participants made comments deemed offensive to the Malaysian prime minister.

Popular talk show host Najip Ali in a statement carried by Mediacorp today expressed regret over comments he made on "OK Chope!", a programme on Singapore's Channel 5 in which panel members give humorous takes on current affairs.

"I realise how insensitive and callous I was. I would like to apologise unreservedly to Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak. I beg his forgiveness and that of my viewers and friends."

In an episode last week, host Vernetta Lopez asked panelists to complete a news headline "Najib slams — for threatening Malaysia's progress".

They responded by offering funny phrases to complete the sentence, including a reference to the RM2.6 billion deposited into Najib's personal accounts, money which Najib claimed was a donation from Saudi Arabia for Umno's 2013 general election campaign.

"Najib with a 'b' slams Najip with a 'p'," said Najip, who is best known for hosting the 1990s regional talent show Asia Bagus.

"Najib slams bomoh's heads with his own coconuts," said another, taking a jibe at shaman Ibrahim Mat Zin, also known as Raja Bomoh, who made headlines with his antics at the peak of the MH370 flight disappearance crisis as well as the recent diplomatic tiff between Malaysia and North Korea.

Lopez then announced the correct headline, "Najib slams fake news for threatening Malaysia's progress", before remarking: "What, he's doing the Trump line now? Fake news!"

"What's he going to do now, follow Trump's hairstyle as well?" Lopez went on.

Mediacorp chief customer officer, Debra Soon also apologised on behalf of Channel 5 and the show's production team, saying the references to Najib were in "poor taste".

"We apologise unreservedly for this mistake."

She added that a repeat of the programme would not be aired.

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