

Najib: Mahathir's support for Anwar due to forex RCI
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PM says Mahathir Mohamad cannot afford to have people such as Anwar Ibrahim testifying against him in the RCI into Bank Negara's forex losses.

PETALING JAYA: Najib Razak says Dr Mahathir Mohamad's support for Anwar Ibrahim as prime minister is driven by his concern over the royal commission of inquiry (RCI) into the losses suffered by Bank Negara due to foreign exchange (forex) trading in the 1990s.

Pointing out that the losses had been incurred during Mahathir's tenure as prime minister, Najib claimed the PPBM chairman's "latest U-turn" was not what it seemed.

"It comes after 20 years of Mahathir vilifying Anwar and using every possible means at his disposal to eliminate him from the political process, including arresting him under the now-repealed Internal Security Act, prosecuting and jailing him and a sustained campaign to attack his moral character.

"However, as Mahathir knows well, Anwar cannot legally contest, so this U-turn is not about the coming general election.

"Mahathir knows that the RCI findings could lead to criminal prosecution, so he cannot afford to have individuals highly relevant to the case, such as Anwar, testifying against him," the prime minister said in a statement today.

Mahathir, who was prime minister from 1981 to 2003, was yesterday reported by The Guardian as saying that Anwar should be released from jail and allowed to contest in parliamentary elections.

He said Anwar was the "victim of a political vendetta" and had been "unfairly treated".

"The decision of the court was obviously influenced by the government and I think the incoming government would be able to persuade the king to give a full pardon for Anwar.

"In which case, he would be able to participate in politics and become prime minister. I can have no objection to that," Mahathir was quoted as saying.

Najib said it was ironic that Mahathir now needed Anwar, "the man he sacked and jailed".

He claimed Mahathir was “obsessed” with “saving his family’s legacy” and making his son, Mukhriz Mahathir, prime minister.

“He has no principles and will do anything,” he said.

He added that Mahathir, as PPBM chairman, had only one parliamentary seat and could not decide who becomes prime minister.

“It would be grossly undemocratic.

“Mahathir demanded Tun Abdullah Badawi resign as prime minister, now demands my resignation, and will demand my successor resigns until his son becomes prime minister – whatever the cost to Malaysia,” he said.

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