

PM will study BMF report, then comment

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir ~~Mohamad~~ said yesterday he will study the final report of the BMF committee of inquiry before making any comments.

"I have not read the report and I will only comment on it after reading it," he told reporters after opening the annual delegates' conference of the West Malaysia religious teachers union in Alor Star.

The three-man committee headed by Auditor-General Tan Sri Ahmad Noordin Zakaria has submitted the report to Bank Bumiputra Malaysia Bhd, which owns the Hong Kong-based BMF.

Various quarters have called for the final report on the \$2.5 billion loans scandal to be made public but Attorney-General Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman disagreed, saying disclosure could prejudice the case against those allegedly involved in the affair.

In Ipoh, the DAP said it will set up a special committee to muster popular support for the public release of the final report.

Meanwhile, the team from the Hong Kong special task force investigating the loans scandal is to be given the final report to help it in its assignment in Malaysia.

The team, comprising senior officials from the Hong Kong Attorney-General's office which arrived on Thursday night, was given the assurance by Tan Sri Basir Ismail, the executive chairman of BBMB at a meeting in Kuala Lumpur yesterday morning.

Team leader Charles Warick Reid, who is also the Attorney-General office's commercial crime unit chief, said the report was to be delivered to them later in the day.

He said the team would in the next two days "browse through it to extract anything that will help in our task here."

It is learnt that four members of the Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) are also expected in Kuala Lumpur to help the team.

Mr Reid said on Thursday that more investigators would be arriving from Hong Kong in the next two months and that there would be at least six investigators working on a "full-time basis" in Malaysia. —
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