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Reuters apologises to Daim over article implying impropriety

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - International news agency Reuters today apologised to First Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin over an article it filed last month.

A Reuters press advisory early today read: "Tun Daim Zainuddin has contacted Reuters concerning an article published by Reuters on Jan 8, entitled 'Malaysia's Daim lends PM a helping hand again', which in his view implied that he had accumulated his personal wealth by abusing his political office.

"We would like to make it clear that it was not our intention to make that suggestion.

"We fully accept that Tun Daim was a wealthy and successful businessman before he assumed political office, a fact which the story also made clear.

"We apologise to Tun Daim for any embarrassment caused by the article."

The article, which did not identify the writer, was datelined Kuala Lumpur. It described Daim, who is also Special Functions Minister, as the person whom Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad turned to when in a pinch.

It went on to describe Daim's initial involvement in Government in the mid-1980s and his return as Finance Minister on Jan 8.

One paragraph of the 24-paragraph story read: "To some Malaysians, Daim is viewed as a public servant who used his position to enrich himself and others in Umno.

"He is reportedly one of the country's richest men, worth an estimated one billion to two billion ringgit (US\$250 million to US\$500 million)."

The article ended with: "But to businessmen and economists, the diminutive Daim is regarded as Malaysia's most able economic manager since the country gained independence from Britain in 1957."

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