

Swiss ask for specific info on illegal deposits

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By PAUL GABRIEL

KUALA LUMPUR: Switzerland is awaiting specific claims to be made by the Government on the request for information on illegal funds deposited in Swiss banks.

Swiss Ambassador to Malaysia Dr Peter A. Schweizer said both sides had executed the preliminary measures, including the clarifications raised by his country.

He said once the claims were received, it would be for the courts in Switzerland to decide on the validity.

"It is a legal question (on) how wrong was the parking of that money (in our banks). Parking of money abroad is not per se wrong.

"In what way was this entertaining of an account in a Swiss bank wrong? Were the funds no longer available to the management of the company, and did the management or someone responsible in it overstep his or her authority in opening the account?"

"It is now in Malaysia's hands to come out with the specific claims for our courts to decide," he said in an interview.

During Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's visit to Switzerland in June, Swiss Confederation president

Kaspar Villiger had pledged to help Malaysia gain access to such information.

Dr Mahathir had said that Malaysia had been assured of help in getting access to certain funds from Malaysia, including funds siphoned from Perwaja Steel, which is being investigated by the Anti-Corruption Agency.

Schweizer said press remarks by certain quarters here that Swiss authorities were finally co-operating in the matter was not true, "as we have been co-operating from the very beginning."