

Pressure mounts for Zulkipli to step down
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Anti-Corruption Agency director-general Zulkipli Mat Noor, who is facing a flurry of serious allegations made by a former subordinate, has been "caught red-handed for telling a lie", said an opposition leader.

Zulkipli reportedly said yesterday he had been "vetted and cleared" by both the ACA and police prior to his appointment as the agency's director-general in 2001. He also said the corruption and sexual crime charges levelled against him were "baseless".

However, the New Straits Times today reported that attorney-general Abdul Gani Patail has called on the police to speed up their investigation against Zulkipli over the corruption allegations despite clearing the ACA boss from the sexual crime charges.

"Clearly, the police had not cleared him or Abdul Gani could not have instructed the IGP (inspector general of police Musa Hassan) to 'speed up' the investigations," Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang said in a two-page statement today.

"For this public lie alone, Zulkipli should be immediately sacked as ACA director-general to restore badly-shattered confidence in the ACA," said the veteran politician, adding that the cabinet should decide on the matter at its meeting tomorrow.

Lim argued that Zulkipli has "lost all authority, credibility and legitimacy to continue as the ACA head".

Zulkipli Mat Noor's career	
	In Special Branch for 23 years. Rose through the ranks to become SB chief.
1996	Johor police chief.
1997	Deputy police commissioner.
2000	Sarawak police chief.
2001	Anti-Corruption Agency director-general.
2004	Reaches retirement. Reappointed ACA chief for another year.
2005	Tenure extended for one year.
2006	Tenure extended until 2008.

Azlan Zamhari / Malaysiakini

Zulkipli landed in the spotlight on Monday following the disclosure of a report penned by former Sabah ACA chief Mohamad Ramli Manan last year which was addressed to then police chief Mohd Bakri Omar.

"How could Zulkipli be cleared for the important and sensitive appointment of ACA director-general, and to be repeatedly extended in his term of office, when he is under such a cloud of serious corruption allegations?" Lim asked.

"What has the cabinet and the prime minister (Abdullah Ahmad Badawi) got to say?"

BN MPs express their views

Meanwhile, vocal BN parliamentarian Shahrir Samad said the allegations should be given due attention.

"What makes this matter significant is that the allegations were not from a poison-pen letter. It's an open (and signed) accusation and has to be looked at very seriously by the government," he told malaysiakini.

"If there is no definitive result after the investigations, then action must be taken against the accuser (to clear the accused)," added Shahrir.

Another outspoken government MP however disagreed that Zulkipli should face any form of action before he was found guilty, including a suspension from his post pending investigation.

"I don't think we should jump the gun because a suspension is a form of punishment. In the criminal justice system, one is presumed innocent until proven guilty in the court of law," said Kota Melaka MP Wong Nai Chee.

Wong said the authorities should be allowed to carry out their investigations first.

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