

Former top cop confirms Tajudin links
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Prime Minister Najib Razak should rethink any kind of settlement with Tajudin Ramli or directing the government-linked companies (GLCs) to withdraw all pending law suits against the former Malaysia Airlines chief.

Former Kuala Lumpur CID chief Mat Zain Ibrahim said this was to ensure that the interests of the public are preserved, and not that of Tajudin or other politically-linked personalities.

"I feel there are 'hidden hands and old players' at work in the Malaysia Airlines scandal, and who are again involved in the recent 'merger' of MAS and AirAsia.

"The appointment of Wan Azmi Wan Hamzah as a director of MAS after he disappeared from the corporate spotlight since 1998 strengthens such a speculation as Wan Azmi is alleged to be involved in holding RM150 million on behalf of (former finance minister) Daim Zainuddin (right).

"It is not wrong for the people to suspect something amiss or be worried that what had happened with Tajudin may happen again with this new exercise. The people have the right to know in detail as to the terms and conditions of this (MAS-AirAsia) agreement," Mat Zain said in a statement provided to Malaysiakini.

Mat Zain was referring to the letter signed by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Nazri Abdul Aziz, dated Aug 8, which stated that he had obtained the government's mandate for the GLCs to enter into an out-of-court settlement with Tajudin - and the prime minister has affirmed this.

"It is not wrong for people to feel they may as well say goodbye to the billions of ringgit which Tajudin may have received when he was MAS chairperson," he said.

Top cop involved in Tajudin probe

Mat Zain, who was privy to some high-profile investigations when in office, said he was the investigating officer in Tajudin's alleged wrongdoing in MAS following a police report lodged by former deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim in 1999.

"Tajudin appeared in the report by Anwar, who also accused Daim of receiving hundreds of millions of ringgit and former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad was said to be protecting all this.

"Anwar's police report included three letters by corporate figures Abdul Halim Saad (left) - said to hold 52 million Faber Merlin shares and 130 million Renong shares - Wan Azmi holding RM150 million for Daim, and Tajudin holding RM70 million for Daim," Mat Zain said.

He said he handled the investigation as he was then Kuala Lumpur CID chief. He is certain the letters written by the three corporate figures are genuine and their contents truthful.

"I have investigated another case in 1995 where I verified with a minister, who did not deny the existence of such a letter relating to Halim and his Umno links," he said.

If this was the truth, Mat Zain said, the questions remained as to where all the money that the three corporate figures were holding in trust came from.

Acrimonious relationship with AG

This also begged the question as to why the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACA), now the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), had not acted on this information although it has known about the

matter since 1999.

“The people cannot accept that it (MACC) is still investigating the case as it has taken 12 years.”

He also questioned why attorney-general Abdul Gani Patail (right) had not taken action against Tajudin even though the police investigations were “crystal clear”.

“I believe Gani still remembers that he had directed the withdrawal of 37 charges against Port Klang assemblyperson Zakariah Mat Deros. This brought disrepute to the AG's Chambers, judiciary and the enforcement agencies.

“Hopefully, in this month of Ramadan, Gani remembers the fate of the government officers who were involved in the MAS and Tajudin scandal investigations, who were persecuted by him for merely doing their job in investigating the matter, and some are languishing in prison,” lamented Mat Zain.

He said Najib may not have been involved in the abuse of power and corruption among senior Umno leaders in 1999.

However, the prime minister, by calling for a settlement in the Tajudin matter, may have been forced to make an unwise decision to the effect of the rakyat losing out.

“I hope Najib himself will not protect the alleged criminal acts committed by Tajudin in the MAS scandal. The action of protecting or hiding a criminal offence is an offence itself.”

There is still time until Sept 29, Mat Zain added, for Najib to make amends, which will show whether the PM is aware of, and is concerned about, the people's grievances in the whole affair.