

PM cannot slink away from 1MDB 'heist', says DAP

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Regardless of the motives behind the latest exposé on 1Malaysia Development Berhad, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has been urged to answer if the material produced are true.

DAP lawmaker Tony Pua said Najib cannot disassociate himself from the "heist of the century".

"The prime minister certainly cannot disclaim responsibility by claiming that he 'was not involved in the day-to-day operations of 1MDB'.

"The prime minister, who also happens to be the finance minister must realise that whether there was 'political motivation' or otherwise is irrelevant to the matter at hand.

"What is more important, is whether the documents and email communications are genuine.

"If these documents and email communications are indeed genuine, then the government must answer for the brazen abuse of power in siphoning money from the wholly-owned Ministry of Finance subsidiary," he added.

Negligence

Whistleblower website Sarawak Report in a report yesterday claimed they have in possession emails and documents that show that 1MDB's joint venture with PetroSaudi in 2009 was a allegedly a front to channel funds to a company controlled by tycoon Jho Low.

The government and PetroSaudi have denied the claims as "politically motivated".

"I would like to emphasise here that 1MDB is a strategic investment firm owned by the government of Malaysia and I would never allow anyone to use or divert public funds for their personal gain," wrote Najib on his Facebook page.

Pua said even if Najib was "not complicit in the serious hanky-panky in 1MDB", he is guilty of gross negligence and incompetence in managing 1MDB under his ministry.

"He is guilty because the opposition and the media have played our role in digging up all the scandals in 1MDB and yet each time, Najib or his ministers and deputies would resolutely defend 1MDB.

"They would shamelessly boast that 1MDB is in 'sound financial health', 'backed by quality assets' and managed by 'a professional and experienced team'," he added.

Stating that such claims "fly in the face of the facts we have today", Pua backed his party boss Lim Kit Siang's call for a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the matter.

Audit required

Meanwhile, Center to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4) also urged that all public institutions, namely the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, Auditor General's office as well as the Public Account's committee to begin a full audit on 1MDB.

C4 executive director Cynthia Gabriel said MACC must step in to investigate the alleged claim of hundreds of millions of US dollars being siphoned away from 1MDB by businessman Jho Low.

"The auditor-general's office is urged to begin a full audit of the 1MDB without any delay and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) must conduct an open inquiry into the 1MDB when parliament convenes on March 9.

"Najib is also urged to table a detailed report in Parliament on the US\$700 million (RM2.5 billion) purportedly siphoned away, and how the 1MDB scandals have had a direct impact on our public coffers, the rejection of a RM3 billion loan by the Malaysian cabinet, and what steps have been taken to salvage our failing economy.

"We further urge for Malaysia to sign the international convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to allow and assist for greater transparency in how the government engages in business initiatives," said Gabriel.