

Kit Siang: Cabinet trying to stymie 1MDB debate?

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The cabinet decision yesterday to audit 1MDB appears to be a scripted move to avoid having to address the issue at the coming Dewan Rakyat session, veteran opposition lawmaker Lim Kit Siang says.

The directive forestalls questioning by lawmakers until the auditor-general completes his investigations, Lim said in a press statement today.

The next session of the Dewan Rakyat begins on Monday, March 9.

Despite this, Lim said, the ministers must still answer for the cabinet's decision to issue a clean bill of health for 1MDB.

Yesterday, the cabinet summoned 1MDB officers and its auditor Deloitte to give it a briefing.

Following this, the Prime Minister's Office said cabinet was satisfied that "no wrongdoing" had been committed within 1MDB.

However, the PMO added the auditor-general has been instructed to audit 1MDB's accounts and present its report to the bi-partisan Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

Now, all ministers implicated

1MDB, a Putrajaya-owned sovereign wealth fund, has come under intense scrutiny over its business decisions, particularly from former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad and opposition figures.

The company has been unable to service some of its loans and it is also accused of having a burgeoning debt that will put extra stress on the national economy.

Meanwhile, Lim also criticised the cabinet for clearing 1MDB of any wrongdoing after listening to the briefing.

"Did all the 35 cabinet ministers present yesterday know what they were doing and fully understood the going-ons in 1MDB over the past six years when they issued a clean bill of health and integrity to 1MDB?"

"Were they presented with any cabinet papers on the 1MDB to read and study before the cabinet meeting?"

"Were they given access to the 'thousands' of 1MDB transactions and email that the Sunday Times of London and Sarawak Report have said they have obtained access to?" Lim asked.

By clearing 1MDB, he added, all the cabinet ministers involved were collectively implicated in any wrongdoings of 1MDB.

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