

Muhyiddin denies conflict with Najib on 1MDB

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Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin has denied that his stinging statement on 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) yesterday contradicted his boss, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

He added that he was not only expressing what the cabinet had discussed with regard to the issue but also gone beyond that, reports Bernama.

"I don't think so (that it contradicts Najib) because if you read correctly and understand properly what I have written, I think it is a fair statement.

"It is a fair decision. It is not in conflict to whatever the prime minister has said," he told reporters after a closed-door meeting with the Wanita Umno Pagoh division at Kompleks Seri Pekembar here today.

Last night, Muhyiddin said public funds should not be used to bail out 1MDB, adding that its board of directors should also be responsible if any wrongdoing was found.

The deputy prime minister was responding to Najib's directive on Wednesday, calling for the auditor-general to independently verify the company's accounts.

Najib (left) also said the auditor-general's report would later be passed to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) for a transparent inspection.

Muhyiddin, who is also Pagoh MP, has instead yesterday called on PAC to start its own investigation on 1MDB, without waiting for the auditor-general's report.

He argued that in asking PAC to pursue the issue independently is in accordance with the decision made by the cabinet.

No bailout, says Muhyiddin

Muhyiddin also told the 1MDB management to make sure that whatever plans they (1MDB) proposed would not put the government in a "difficult situation".

"I cautioned (them) about the issue of 'no bailout' because I think that Malaysians would want that kind of assurance," he said.

In a strongly-worded statement yesterday, Muhyiddin said there should be no strip sale of the firm's assets to pay off its hefty debts, amounting to RM42 billion.

"The government will suffer a loss if restructuring of 1MDB involves sales of Tun Razak Exchange and Bandar Malaysia land.

"The land banks were obtained from the government on the cheap," he said.

Meanwhile, veteran newsman A Kadir Jasin in a blog post today lauded Muhyiddin's call for a "forensic auditing" to be conducted on 1MDB.

"Alhamdulillah (praise to God), that is the right method. 1MDB needs forensic auditing just like how a doctor investigates the history of his or her patient.

"Thank you Muhyiddin and hopefully, (Home Minister) Ahmad Zahid (Hamidi) does not accuse that the Umno deputy president's action had a political motive," he said.

Ahmad Zahid had reportedly claimed those who question 1MDB's affairs as harbouring "political motives".

Kadir however said the Umno vice-president needed Najib's support to deal with his own crisis in relation to the letter he sent to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on gambling kingpin Paul Phua.

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