

## **Stand firm on 1MDB or lose credibility, DPM told**

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Last week, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin raised eyebrows when he issued a statement which appeared to contradict his boss on 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

Though he had denied this, Muhyiddin, however, made one thing crystal clear - the government should not bail out the ailing firm.

Today, the government announced that it has set aside RM950 million for 1MDB, terming it as "standby credit".

This was approved last month while the decision to audit the firm was made after last Wednesday's cabinet meeting.

Sharing his views on this, veteran newsman A Kadir Jasin said Muhyiddin - who made his statement a day after the audit plan was revealed- risked soiling his reputation if he backed down.

"Muhyiddin must stick to his guns, or he would be seen as not being credible," he told Malaysiakini.

### **DPM has many supporters**

The former News Straits Times group editor-in-chief said many in Umno are supporting the deputy prime minister on this issue.

"Not only in Umno, but many Malaysians in general are also behind him because they want to know the truth. If he backs down, then he would be disappointing a lot of people," he said.

Asked if in other words, the ball is now in Muhyiddin's court, Kadir replied that the ball is in everyone's court since 1MDB is a government-owned firm.

"If he withdraws, then we smash the ball at him instead of passing it to him," he said.

Kadir also urged politicians on both sides of the divide to move beyond mudslinging on this issue for it concerns the nation's future.

On whether this could see a challenge being mounted against Najib in the party polls slated for next year, Kadir replied: "We are not even sure if the next party polls would be held."

### **Why the call for an audit?**

He said Umno had often postponed its polls when it is close to a general election.

However, Umno does not need to wait for its party polls to oust Najib as speculation is rife that there are attempts to pressure him to step down.

Kadir, who is a close associate of former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamd, is himself seen as being part of this movement due to his blog postings that have been critical of the Najib administration.

Responding to the recent developments concerning 1MDB such as the audit and the issue being raised in the cabinet, the veteran newsman said it signals one of two things.

"First, the prime minister suddenly feels that he has to be transparent, or, that 1MDB is in such a financial mess that things can no longer be swept under the carpet," he added.

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