

'How did PM's stepson afford plush condos?'

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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad has joined in the chorus of calls to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to explain his family's wealth.

In a post on his blog today, Mahathir took aim at Najib's stepson Riza Aziz, questioning how Riza could afford hundreds of millions of ringgit to purchase real estate in the US and produce Hollywood films.

"Initially, Riza's money is said to be from inheritance of (former prime minister) Abdul Razak Hussein's family. Then it was denied.

"The question is, if it is not from Razak's family, then where did so much money come from?

"Is it from business? If yes, what kind of business and where? Was income tax collected? By which government?" Mahathir asked in his posting.

Money trail

Riza had previously said that Penang-born billionaire Jho Low had helped fund his company Red Granite Pictures to produce the Oscar-nominated film *The Wolf of Wall Street*.

Jho Low's name is also mentioned in the film's end credit.

However, according to *New York Times*, the end credits was later changed and Riza attributed the film's financing to Aabar Investments chief executive Mohamed Ahmed Badwy al-Husseiny, who had also had business dealings with Jho Low and 1MDB.

Jho Low had also admitted to selling a penthouse to Riza for US\$33.5 million (RM124 million) and another Los Angeles mansion for US\$65 million but insisted it was done at market value.

Previously, the Prime Minister's Office had attributed Najib's family wealth to inheritance after a query from *New York Times* about the premier's jet-setting ways, his wife's luxury jewellery and alleged stacks of cash at his home as claimed by a former aide.

The explanation appeared to have irked Najib's siblings, who issued a rare public statement, stressing that their father Abdul Razak was a principled man known for his frugality and any suggestions otherwise tainted the memory of the statesman.

The statement, which excluded Najib, was signed by Johari, Nizam, Nazim and Nazir.

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