

Mara boss: PM opposed Aussie property purchase
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Sticking to the excuse that his statements were twisted, Mara chairperson Annuar Musa now claims that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak opposed the purchase in Melbourne.

He claimed this forced Mara to appeal Najib's decision, and the purchase was eventually approved by the Economic Council (EC), which is also chaired by the prime minister.

"Actually, he Najib did not approve it, and this was written in a May 10 letter.

"The Finance Ministry informed that the prime minister had not given his approval for the purchase, so the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development and Mara appealed this.

"Then Mara and the ministry brought it to the Economic Council for discussion because it involves foreign loans and the council only approved 30 percent of Mara funds to be used for the purchase. The rest had to be borrowed from foreign banks," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

Annuar was speaking to reporters at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office in Putrajaya, where he had gone to submit documents.

Contrary to Annuar's claim that "someone twisted it", it was the Mara chairperson who had said Najib approved the project before the deal went through.

He later blamed Malaysiakini and the Malaysian Insider for their reports.

Najib himself tweeted that certain media had twisted the matter.

Following this, Malaysiakini published an audio recording from Annuar's Wednesday press conference which showed that the latter's quotes were not misrepresented.

Incidentally, Mara falls under the purview of the Ministry of Regional and Rural Development, which is headed by Shafie Apdal.

The Umno vice-president has been a vocal critic of 1MDB, which is a major thorn for Najib.

Recently, Najib even issued an ultimatum to ministers who disagreed with him on the 1MDB issue to relinquish their post, but Shafie refused to do so.

Culprit 'more or less' identified

Meanwhile, Annuar submitted several documents in relation to the purchase of properties in Australia by Mara subsidiary, Mara Incorporated Sdn Bhd to the MACC.

"We want this issue to be given priority and expedited," he said, adding that Mara would also be hiring a foreign auditor.

Asked if the culprit behind the case had been identified, Annuar replied: "More or less".

Responding to another question, he said it is up to Shafie as to what action the officer should face.

However, he added the matter would be discussed during the Mara council meeting on July 1.

The Australian media had reported that Mara had purchased the Dudley House apartment in Melbourne above market value.

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