

NGOs urge Najib's suspension from all posts
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A group of 33 NGOs has joined the urging for Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to be suspended from all posts, pending investigations on allegations that 1MDB funds have been traced to his personal bank accounts.

In a joint statement today, the group said that in view of the serious allegations by The Wall Street Journal (WSJ), Najib must give a clear and full refutation of the allegations as well as relinquish his posts immediately, to ensure there's no interference in the investigations.

It said that since the WSJ has stood by its report and claimed that Najib himself had seen the investigation papers, it believes that the investigators had already gathered the necessary evidence but suspended investigations due to the involvement of high-ranking government officials.

"We believe that the present (1MDB scandals) linked to Najib are one of the main reasons affecting the Malaysian stock market performance, and has even indirectly impacted the depreciation of the ringgit.

"Since the WSJ's accusation implicates the ethics and integrity of the government, Najib, as the premier, should undertake full responsibility and show a good example by taking the necessary corrective measures to restore public trust in our government," the group added.

The 33 groups include the youth sections of Chinese assembly halls in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Negri Sembilan, and Malacca, the human rights group Suaram, and the student group Kesatuan Mahasiswa Malaysia.

Take legal action

In addition to explaining as well as going on leave, the group also urged Najib to take legal action against former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the WSJ so that he can defend his innocence in court.

They also called on Bank Negara Malaysia to freeze Najib's personal and joint bank accounts and probe for possible embezzlement and money laundering.

The WSJ had published a report last week alleging that US\$700 million (RM2.6 billion) in 1MDB funds had been traced to Najib's bank accounts, citing investigation papers of an unnamed Malaysian agency.

Najib had decried the allegations as political sabotage and had said that he is weighing legal options.

A joint task force investigating the alleged misappropriation of funds announced today that

it had frozen six bank accounts in relation to the investigation.

The task force is comprised of members of the attorney-general's chambers, Bank Negara, the police, and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

Though the task force did not reveal whose accounts were frozen, a source told Malaysiakini on condition of anonymity that three of them belonged to Najib.

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