

Report: Putrajaya blocks Aussie request for info
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Putrajaya is purportedly "blocking" an Australian government's request for information over a scandal, which implicates those in the offices of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his predecessor, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

This is according to a Fairfax Media report published in the Sydney Morning Herald today, alleging improper dealings in the printing of polymer bank notes produced by two Australian Reserve Bank firms.

"Malaysia has ignored a formal mutual assistance request from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department to hand over sensitive information about the financial dealings of a group of Malaysian middlemen embroiled in Australia's most important bribery case," it said.

The report also alleged Najib's government blocked the request because of the suspected involvement of top Malaysian officials.

"Fairfax Media can reveal the scandal is particularly sensitive in Malaysia because some of the allegedly corrupt middlemen are suspected of having close dealings with figures in the offices of both Najib and Abdullah (photo) who was the fifth PM," the report stated.

It further claimed that the Malaysian middlemen were implicated in the scandal resulting in an on-going prosecution of several Australian businessmen who had worked with two Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) firms.

The scandal, the Australian report said, involved claims that Malaysian officials were bribed by the two Reserve Bank of Australia firms, to secure contracts to turn Malaysia's currency from paper to polymer notes between the late 1990's and 2009.

The report today comes less than two weeks following The Wall Street Journal and Sarawak report expose alleging that RM2.6 billion was deposited from 1MDB to Najib's personal accounts on March 2013.

'DPM's office used to negotiate kickbacks'

Citing sources, the Australian media claimed the deputy prime minister's office, at the time Najib was holding the post, was allegedly used by middlemen to negotiate kickbacks from RBA.

Fairfax media further claimed the information on the matter was not from the on-going Australian court proceedings but from an on-going investigations that it had done, involving high level sources.

They further claimed a Najib representative had dismissed the claims and is threatening legal action.

Previously, it was reported that an ex-assistant Bank Negara governor, Mohamad Daud Dol Moin was charged in the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court in 2011 of receiving a bribes totalling RM100,000 from a middleman regarding the polymer bank notes, while businessman Abdul Kayum Syed Ahmad was charged with bribing Daud.

Australian newspaper The Age had also previously reported in 2011 that then Home Minister, Hishammuddin Hussein's brother, Harris Onn Hussein, was paid to secure a government contract for an Australian company.

Fairfax further reported today that Malaysia's refusal to cooperate has hampered efforts by the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions to make its case that former senior executives from two Reserve Bank firms conspired to bribe Malaysian officials.

Last month, Fairfax also exposed an unrelated bribery scandal involving state owned Mara in purchasing multi-million ringgit Australian properties.

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