

## **Najib ignores my advice on 1MDB, says Muhyiddin**

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**By Radzi Razak**

Deputy Umno president Muhyiddin Yassin has told party grassroots that his advice to party president Najib Abdul Razak on the 1MDB controversy were ignored.

Speaking at the closing of the Cheras Umno division annual general meeting, Muhyiddin said he had advised Najib on several occasions.

"I told the PM: Why don't you vacate your position as the chair of (1MDB's) board of advisors?"

"(I said this) because it would seem like he was involved, but he disagreed.

"I am trying to help [...] I'm not doing something to topple the PM. But it's okay. I guess that is his right," said Muhyiddin.

He said he had also advised Najib on many occasions to answer pertinent questions commonly asked by the public on 1MDB.

Regarding the accusation by the Wall Street Journal that nearly US\$700 million were transferred into the premier's personal bank accounts, Muhyiddin said he sent phone text messages to Najib, urging him to immediately deny the report.

"In the early stages, I texted PM. I told him, 'Sir this is serious, you have to deny this'.

"The PMO responded [...] but there are many questions left unanswered," he said.

### **'I reminded him weekly'**

Muhyiddin said he was not trying to topple Najib but merely sharing the people's sentiment regarding the matter.

"I am not a responsible deputy if I say nothing. I reminded (Najib and the cabinet) almost every week in the cabinet meeting.

Najib has said that he did not use 1MDB money for "personal gain", but has not denied WSJ's allegation outright.

At one point during his hour-long speech, Muhyiddin also described 1MDB as the biggest problem faced by the party.

"If there is no 1MDB, Umno has no problems," he said.

1MDB is Najib's brainchild, conceived in 2009 as a wealth fund meant to propel Malaysia's economy. It is 100-percent owned by the Finance Ministry, which Najib heads.

However, six years later, the company is saddled with a RM42 billion debt. The company made news in recent months because it is struggling to repay its debts.

### **Interest as much as Johor's budget**

Muhyiddin said that the interest incurred by 1MDB's debts were far too high, comparing it to Johor's annual budget of RM1 billion.

"How many years could the money be used to develop states like Johor?," he asked, as a large number of people nodded in agreement.

Incidentally, Muhyiddin is the current Johor Umno head and former Johor menteri besar.

At this juncture, he reminded the audience once again that he was not trying to oust Najib, despite the party's "weakened" state.

"This is why I rarely speak outside the party because others might misinterpreted and say 'oh, this is a plot to topple the PM.

"I calculated my words carefully and I don't want it to be seen as a challenge because our party is now weak," he said.

During his speech, Muhyiddin said multiple times that he was not trying to oust Najib.