

Minister mum on SR's Najib US\$650m poser

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Geraldine Tong

Communications and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak has refused to comment on Sarawak Report's claim that most of the money deposited into Prime Minister's Najib Abdul Razak's personal accounts before the 13th general election had subsequently been transferred abroad.

This, he said, is because the whistleblower website allegedly has their own hidden agenda and their claims are based on purportedly tampered documents.

"I don't want to comment because to me, Sarawak Report has a motive, and it has been proven that some documents in their hands have been tampered.

"How can we comment on documents which have been tampered?" he asked in a press conference after a cycling event in Kuala Lumpur today.

Yesterday, Sarawak Report claimed that US\$650 million out of the US\$681 million deposited into Najib's personal accounts had been transferred back to Tanore Finance Corporation at Falcon Bank in Singapore after the 13th general election.

Weeks after US financial daily Wall Street Journal reported that billions of allegedly 1MDB funds had been deposited into Najib's accounts, the government finally admitted the funds were "political donations" for Umno's use.

Allegations of tampering

Allegations that documents used by Sarawak Reports had been tampered arose after the arrest of former PetroSaudi International employee Xavier Andre Justo in Thailand on allegations of attempting to blackmail his former employer.

Justo had confirmed that Clare Rewcastle-Brown, the Britain-based publisher of the Sarawak Report, was one of the buyers interested in the documents he had stolen from his former employer.

Former Sarawak journalist Lester Melanyi had also released a video confession saying that Rewcastle-Brown had fabricated documents related to 1MDB while he was working for Sarawak Report.

Meanwhile, Rewcastle-Brown had dismissed these allegations.

Salleh also said today that Najib is more transparent than some others, though he did not mention names.

"Najib is very transparent. The RM2.6 billion that went into his account was cleared, he was investigated, a task force was formed and the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission had said that it's a legal political contribution. He has hidden nothing.

"To me, that is more transparent than others, who are more secretive on these matters," he said.

Even regarding reports that former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, one of Najib's fiercest critics, had also received political funding from the Middle East, Salleh maintained that there is nothing wrong with it.

"It's not wrong to receive the funds, but to say we didn't receive any funds, of course that is not right," he explained.

However, he said Mahathir should not be criticising others for something the former prime minister has done himself.

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