

## **'Political fund committee not looking at PM's 2.6b'**

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Paul Low, the chairperson of the National Consultative Committee on Political Funding (JKNMPP), said it will not be investigating Najib's RM2.6 billion supposedly deposited in his personal bank account as a political donation.

The minister in the Prime Minister's Department said this in an interview with Sin Chew Daily published today.

He said this is because the JKNMPP has no investigative powers and is not a law enforcement agency, and hence the task falls upon the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the police instead.

There is despite pressure from DAP for the committee to investigate Najib's funding, while the Bar Council had said that investigations on the funding should be completed first before any talk of new regulations on political funding.

Bar Council president Steven Thiru (photo) had highlighted that such 'donations' falls under the definition of 'gratification' under Section 3 of the MACC Act.

"Don't forget," Low rebutted, "Political donations were not regulated at the time. If the public wants to look back into past funding, then all past funding must be investigated. Since all (donations) are illegal, why look back?"

He urged those invited to participate in the political funding committee to be more mature and help chart a new course for the country, instead of dwelling in the past, which he said would not resolve any issue.

### **Open to feedback**

Regardless, he stressed that the committee is open to receiving memorandums and other feedback even from those who have declined to participate in the committee's proceedings.

While he did not name any person, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng (photo) had previously urged the committee to investigate Najib's RM2.6 billion funding, or the party would not take part in its proceedings.

The committee was announced by Najib on Aug 14, amid public pressure on him to explain the deposit in his personal bank account.

Low said the committee is to consult all stakeholders and devise a check-and-balance mechanism on political funding, since no rules on the matter exists at this point.

He also defended the funding during a press conference just after announcing the

committee.

“There is no regulation on political funding. There is only regulation in respect to spending during elections.

“But there is no regulation in respect to political donation. So you cannot say what is right and what is wrong, okay?” he said.

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