

Pua: I'm just convenient target for 1MDB leak attacks

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DAP lawmaker Tony Pua says he is a 'convenient victim' for pinpointing as the person who leaked information on 1MDB to US-based The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) by bloggers aligned to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Many are privy to the interim audit report on 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) that was prepared by the National Audit Department, Pua told Malaysiakini today.

"There were 13-members in the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), so why only pinpoint me?"

"Is it because I am a convenient victim?" asked Pua, the MP for Petaling Jaya Utara and who is also a PAC member, in reference to the Umno-linked website MyKMU.net asking whether he could have leaked the audit report to WSJ.

WSJ cited the "parliamentary committee probing 1MDB" and its "transcript of the proceedings" in its Sept 9 news report that US\$1.4 billion paid by the Malaysian state-owned fund to Abu Dhabi-based International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC) had gone missing.

1MDB is claiming that WSJ breached Malaysian laws by using "clearly confidential information in its reporting" and has called on the relevant authorities to investigate the matter. It accused the PAC as the possible source of the leak.

In its strong call to the relevant authorities to thoroughly investigate the 1MDB interim audit report leak to WSJ, 1MDB also asked that all requisite actions be taken to preserve the integrity and standing orders of the Malaysian Parliament.

Yesterday, MyKMU.net, questioned whether Pua, a vociferous critic of the state-owned firm and a member of the PAC, was responsible for the leak of information on the PAC investigation into 1MDB to WSJ.

"This means PAC members themselves are not trustworthy and working with WSJ to sabotage 1MDB, which is in the process of restructuring its debts and business," MyKMU.net said.

The blogsite then accused PAC members of selling the information to the US daily and it went on to zero in on Pua as the possible culprit.

All done to divert attention from 1MDB fiasco

Pua noted that this was done to divert public attention from the real issues - the 1MDB fiasco

and the RM2.6 billion in "donation" Najib had received from a mysterious Middle Eastern person.

Meanwhile, PAC member and PKR Selayang MP William Leong said the accusation was particularly unfair to Pua.

Besides PAC members, the officers of the National Audit Department who drafted the audit report, as well as the representatives of government agencies who attended the PAC hearings into 1MDB, also have access to information on 1MDB.

"Many government officers have sat in the meetings. It is always a whole room full of people," Leong told Malaysiakini.

According to him, the opposition representatives who sit in the parliamentary committee have had plenty of opportunities to release the content of the interim report, since they received it on July 9. But they did not do it.

"So, I don't think the leaked information came from PAC members," he said.

However, Leong sees no issue in WSJ citing the source of its information, since the public has the right to the information.

"The issue is about the truth. But the government is using the rules to stop the truth (from prevailing)," he said, adding that there is no need for the government to train its guns on the whistleblower.

"This is probably the only country in the world that does not know the meaning of whistleblower," Leong said.

In the RM2.6 donation scandal, he said, Malaysia does not need a Sherlock Holmes, but only needs the prime minister and his RM2.6 billion donor to make appearance and tell the truth.

Meanwhile, PAC deputy chairperson Dr Tan Seng Giaw said the WSJ didn't specifically state which PAC member leaked the information.

The PAC's hearing, Tan said, could have been bugged as well, since all the representatives and secretaries from the various agencies present either brought along their handphones or other bugging devices.