

1MDB not main focus of FBI probe, says Zahid

MalaysiaKini.com

Oct 10th, 2015

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the issue of 1MDB was not a major focus of a probe by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

"Maybe the issue is big as it is shouted about in the country (Malaysia) because in our country it is used as a political issue," said Ahmad Zahid to Malaysian journalists in Washington DC on Friday.

Ahmad Zahid, who is on a working visit to the administrative centre of the United States (U.S.) said 1MDB was not raised at all during his meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry and also in discussions with senior FBI officers.

"Nothing on 1MDB was raised by the FBI or John Kerry or any party that I met when I was in Washington," he said when asked on media reports that the FBI had started their investigation on 1MDB.

"(1MDB) is not a big issue to them at all," he said.

Ahmad Zahid met John Kerry at the State Department here Thursday to sign a document on Homeland Security Presidential Directive Six, to enable Malaysia to become the 39th nation to participate in the US Visa Waiver programme.

Other than the meeting with Kerry, Ahmad Zahid, who is also home minister, held discussions with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and FBI which touched on the issues of IS violence, security in the South China Sea and migration.

Freedom of expression on the agenda

The deputy prime minister also advised the public against being influenced by numerous statements that purportedly international agencies, specifically in the US, were conducting investigations based on allegation by several individuals from Malaysia, who were said to have met the agencies.

"I've met the deputy director of FBI (Mark F Giuliano) and senior officials of FBI. Not even a word mentioned on 1MDB," he said.

He said also with him in the meeting was Malaysian ambassador to the US Awang Adek Hussin and Home Ministry secretary-general Alwi Ibrahim.

"I don't know where the news come from. I've met FBI and other parties... the matter did not crop up," he said.

Meanwhile, according to Kerry's office, the vice-president also discussed with Ahmad Zahid

on issues relating to trafficking in persons and freedom of expression in Malaysia.

Kerry said that under the Homeland Security Presidential Directive Six, the State Department works with the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center to negotiate arrangements for the exchange of terrorist screening information with foreign partners like Malaysia.

- Bernama

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Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/315280>