

1MDB chief says ready to brief Rafizi, Tony Pua

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1MDB chief Arul Kanda Kandasamy said he is ready to brief anyone on the beleaguered state fund, including opposition lawmakers Rafizi Ramli and Tony Pua.

"We will meet with anyone who wants to understand more (about 1MDB), even Rafizi and Pua," he said at a seminar organised to explain 1MDB, the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), and Budget 2016 at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) in Kuala Lumpur today.

He was speaking in response to a suggestion from a Umno member during the Q&A session, who said Arul Kanda should invite opposition members who purportedly still do not seem to understand the 1MDB issue.

Pua had previously challenged Arul Kanda to a question-and-answer session on 1MDB, which the sovereign fund chief initially accepted - on condition that Pua resigned from the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

Though he later retracted his condition and the two men were geared for their debate, Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia intervened and forbade the showdown.

This is because Pua remains a member of the PAC which is currently probing 1MDB, he had said.

Although Pakatan Harapan announced that Rafizi would replace Pua in the debate, Arul Kanda declined to continue with the debate, saying that his acceptance of the challenge was from Pua specifically.

Earlier, another Umno member had asked why vocal 1MDB critics, such as former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, as well as Pua, were not invited to the seminar.

Arul Kanda said that Umno information chief Ahmad Maslan, who was the moderator of the event, had indeed opened up the seminar for anyone to attend.

"Anyone is welcome to join us today. Ahmad Maslan had opened this session up to everyone, including opposition and whoever else," he said.

Another audience member had also asked on the extent of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's involvement in the state fund.

The 1MDB boss reminded those present that 1MDB is fully owned by the Finance Ministry.

As such, he said, Najib's involvement in 1MDB is in his capacity as the Finance Minister.

Malaysiakini had previously discovered that in Clause 117 of the memorandum & articles of association of Terengganu Investment Authority before it became 1MDB, the prime minister's **written approval** was required for any financial commitment.