

PAC deputy chief wants WSJ to submit evidence on 1MDB

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The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) had been told to submit the evidence on 1MDB to Public Accounts Committee (PAC) so it could follow up with the relevant parties at the hearing of the state-owned strategic fund.

PAC deputy chairman Dr Tan Seng Giaw made the call when he was asked to respond on the latest report by the US financial daily.

"We cannot ask questions based on allegations. We can only follow up with questions based on facts," he told Malaysiakini.

"We do not know the source of the report, how are we going to ask them?"

"Being unreasonable cannot be the way (of how PAC conducts its interview during proceedings)," he added.

Thus, Tan suggested that WSJ provide them with evidence to allow them to follow up based on facts.

In its latest report, the daily had cited minutes of the 1MDB board meeting where the directors had voiced their worry of being probed for criminal breach of trust and financial irregularity.

It claimed 1MDB prioritised political spending despite insufficient cashflow.

The report also claimed that billionaire Jho Low helped the BN government handle the election-related spending.

WSJ editor Tom Wright (photo) said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, who is also the chairman of 1MDB advisory board, had fired audit firms Ernst & Young and KPMG after they asked questions about the fund's joint venture with PetroSaudi International.

On this, Tan confirmed that both Ernst & Young and KPMG were terminated by 1MDB.

"We knew that they were fired, but no reasons were given by them at the proceedings," he said.

Difficulty in summoning Jho Low

Meanwhile, Tan also reiterated on the difficulty in summoning Low, as the latter's name has not been appearing in any of the records related to 1MDB.

"His name last appeared on (1MDB's precursor) Terengganu Investment Authority (TIA) and not 1MDB.

"We can only summon the witness through the treasury. Furthermore, (even if we summon Low), we do not know if he will come," he said.

"From the aspect of law, you need to have some basis to call the witness," Tan added.

PAC chairman Hasan Arifin refused to respond to WSJ's latest report.

"It is not my duty to comment on this matter," he spoke curtly before cutting off the line.

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