

Zahid unhappy Swiss AG went public on 1MDB probe

MalaysiaKini.com

Jan 31st, 2016

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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today expressed unhappiness over the Swiss authorities' decision to make public its request for Malaysian cooperation in its 1MDB probe.

Zahid said the request should have been relayed through official channels.

"Making a public statement, in my opinion, is not a proper move.

"Not only it could strain ties between two countries but also lead to bias in media reports," Zahid told reporters after delivering his closing address at the Tourism Fair 2016 in Kuala Lumpur.

He added that the government has instructed attorney-general (AG) Mohamed Apandi Ali to arrange a meeting with Swiss AG Michael Lauber.

Zahid said this when asked for comment on the request for assistance from Lauber's office over the Swiss investigations into alleged misappropriation of US\$4 billion from Malaysian state firms.

This was part of its probe on 1MDB funds, the Swiss AG's office said in a press statement.

Reuters on Friday quoted Lauber's office as saying that the request pertained to possible violations of Swiss laws related to bribery of foreign officials, misconduct in public office, money-laundering and criminal mismanagement at 1MDB.

In insisting that the probe is a separate matter than the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's (MACC) investigations, Apandi had also pledged to cooperate with his Swiss counterpart.

Last week, Apandi had cleared Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak of any criminal offences or corruption linked to 1MDB, declaring that US\$681 million deposited into his personal bank account was a gift from Saudi Arabia's royal family.

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