

## **Muhyiddin: PM kept mum when quizzed on Cayman Island funds**

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INTERVIEW Muhyiddin Yassin has claimed that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak kept silent when confronted last year regarding the US\$1.103 billion which 1MDB invested in the Cayman Islands fund.

“I had asked about the money brought in through BSI Bank Singapore. The PM then made the statement in Parliament saying ‘the money had been brought in’. But information later revealed there was no money and it turned out to be units.

“I asked Bank Negara (Governor Zeti Akhtar Aziz) what is this all about as it is the regulator. She said it is true, the money did not go in,” the former deputy premier told Malaysiakini.

Following this, Muhyiddin said he met Najib and warned him that in other countries, a prime minister could be impeached for misleading Parliament.

“I met the PM and said ‘you spoke this in Parliament, you responded like this in Parliament and you said there is money, but now there is no money. For me, it is a problem as in other places; a PM can be impeached for not telling the truth’. Najib kept quiet,” he alleged.

It was reported that Najib, who is also finance minister, had replied in Parliament that the balance of US\$1.103 billion which 1MDB had invested in a Cayman Islands fund was brought back but kept in BSI Bank Ltd, Singapore.

BSI is a Swiss bank operating in Singapore. The Finance Ministry was replying to a question from Tony Pua (DAP-Petaling Jaya Utara).

More than two months later, on May 20, the Finance Ministry issued a correction to the March written reply, that the US\$1.103 billion transferred by 1MDB from Cayman Islands to Singapore was money "redeemed" in the form of assets in US dollars.

There was more confusion when Finance Minister II Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah clarified that the assets were in fact in the form of "units", but refused to explain what he meant by that.

Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad in a blog posting later in May said the 1MDB management must be presumed guilty unless large sums of its money which remain unaccounted for are found.

"With money claimed to have been invested in Cayman Islands and despite claims that it had been brought back and is now in Singapore, the money cannot be demonstrated to be there in tangible form. Then [1MDB] management will be held responsible for its loss," he

had said.

### **Twice rejected by AG**

Meanwhile, Muhyiddin, during the interview with Malaysiakini, also alleged that when he was with the government, he was informed that 1MDB had flouted several laws under the amended Financial Services Act.

“I was told that according to the Bank Negara investigation the alleged wrongdoing was 1MDB failing to abide with what it had initially approved. For example, it was approved for decision A, but it was done for purpose B.

“While this was going on, the attorney-general (Abdul Gani Patail) was removed and replaced with a new one.

“When the report was handed to the new AG (Mohamed Apandi Ali), the result we see is that the case saw no prosecution or was dismissed. Twice, appeals were made but this was rejected by the new AG,” he said.

Muhyiddin said he believes that Bank Negara had conducted an in-depth investigation and the evidence is strong.

“We have to understand that Bank Negara is a prestigious organisation under Zeti where she herself is recognised as one of the best central bank governors in Asia,” he added.

A Bank Negara official, when contacted regarding the former number two’s claims, declined to comment on “matters that are political in nature”.

Both Najib and 1MDB have denied wrongdoing and blamed such allegations on those conspiring to topple the prime minister.