

Putrajaya: ABC report confirms Najib's statement on funds

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The Australian media has confirmed Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's statement and the findings of Malaysian authorities that the money deposited into his personal bank accounts was a donation from a Saudi royalty, said Putrajaya.

"The investigations included forensic examination of every wire transfer," said a government spokesperson in a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office today.

"Malaysian authorities also travelled to Saudi Arabia to examine documentation and interview members of the royal family, and the officials who administered the donation.

"As the leaked letter from Saudi Arabia states, the donation was a gift to the prime minister for promoting moderate Islam, and his leadership in combatting terrorism and extremism – such as by launching his Global Movement of Moderates initiative.

"The letter makes clear the gift was to be used as the prime minister saw fit; would be transferred directly or through the donor's companies; and no benefit was expected in return," the spokesperson added.

Separately, the Foreign Ministry said the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)'s Four Corners programme was "one-sided".

"While many official statements by the government of Malaysia towards the allegation have been produced to clarify the issue, it seems that the clarifications had been conveniently ignored and had resulted to a biased reporting," it said in a statement.

It reiterated that the government cooperates with all investigations and expects the media to similarly cooperate to ensure balanced reporting.

It said the report by PAC on 1MDB will be tabled at the Parliament soon.

Wisma Putra also reiterated that the Four Corners journalists were arrested because they crossed a security cordon in Kuching, while trying to ask a question to the PM.

Yesterday, the ABC published a letter from Saudi prince Saud Abdulaziz Majid to Najib.

In the letter, the prince pledged US\$375 million for the prime minister, stating that Najib could do as he pleased with the gift.

The letterhead stated the missive was from the private office of "Saud Abdulaziz Majid al Saud" and the letter was signed by "HRH Prince Saud Abdulaziz Al-Saud".

Prince Abdulaziz Majid is the grandson of the late King Abdulaziz - the first monarch of the House of Saud.

Prince Abdulaziz Majid was the governor of Madinah at the time the letter, dated Nov 1, 2011, and was issued.

"This letter is issued as a gesture of good faith and for clarification. I do not expect any personal benefit whether directly or indirectly as a result of the gift.

"The gift should not in any event be construed as an act of corruption since this is against the practice of Islam, and I personally do not encourage such practice in any manner whatsoever," read the letter.

Najib has repeatedly denied abusing public funds for personal gain, and blamed such allegations on those conspiring to topple him from power.

His detractors, including former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad, remain unconvinced and continue to attack the prime minister on the money deposited into his bank accounts.

Previously, attorney-general Mohamed Apandi Ali also cleared Najib of any wrongdoing, but critics claim this was a cover-up, which the government has denied.

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