

'Embarrassment is why WSJ will not admit PM's billions is Saudi donation'

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The prime minister's press secretary Tengku Sariffuddin Tengku Ahmad said the *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)* had finally admitted that the billions of ringgit received by Najib Abdul Razak was indeed a Saudi donation and claimed the publication had previously refused to acknowledge this out of fear of embarrassment.

Tengku Sariffuddin said this in response to WSJ's report today which noted that around US\$200 million out of over US\$1 billion in Najib's personal bank accounts came from Saudi Arabia.

However, Tengku Sariffuddin did not address the fact that the WSJ report stated investigators believe the "majority" of funds originated from 1MDB.

Nor did he address the damaging allegations that Najib's family had spent the money on holidays, shopping and jewellery.

"Today, for the first time, the *Wall Street Journal* has been forced to admit that at least some of the funds donated to the Prime Minister came from Saudi Arabia.

"For nearly a year, the *WSJ* denied that the funds came from Saudi Arabia, and attacked all those who suggested otherwise.

"Maybe it's their embarrassment that stops them (from) accepting the facts in full. Namely, as the prime minister has always maintained, the funds were a donation from Saudi Arabia - as the evidence shows.

"However, today is a small step towards the *WSJ* admitting that they have been wrong all along - and that they were wrong to base their reporting on unnamed and anonymous sources who have never been revealed and may not even exist," said Tengku Sariffuddin said in a statement today.

Tengku Sarifuddin stressed that the attorney-general had reviewed and examined all evidences, including wire transfers and interviews with the royal family, in confirming that the fund was a donation from the Saudi royal family.

“Neither the confirmation from lawful Malaysian authorities, nor the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia, nor reputable outlets such as the *BBC* and *Daily Telegraph*, was enough to make the *WSJ* stop their attacks or denials that any of the funds had come from Saudi Arabia.

“This exposed the bias in the *WSJ*’s reporting, and made clear that their coverage was not driven by an impartial desire to cover the facts,” he said.

Tengku Sarifuddin also accused *WSJ* of being a party of Dr Mahathir Mohamad’s campaign to oust Najib.

“Their reporting was based on false information they were willingly fed Mahathir’s Anti-Najib Campaign,” he said.

The *WSJ* report today said Najib had spent some US\$15 million in the US, Italy, Malaysia and elsewhere.

Among the spending include US\$56,000 at Kuala Lumpur car dealership Signature Exotic Cars, US\$14 million at clothing retailer Jakel, 750,000 euros at a jewellery store in Italy and US\$130,625 at exclusive fashion store Chanel in Hawaii.