

WSJ stands by reports, claims U-turn on Bank Negara governor
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Alyaa Alhadjri

The Wall Street Journal has defended its earlier reports naming the new Bank Negara governor as Finance Ministry treasurer-general Irwan Siregar Abdullah, which has been accused of being blatant lies.

In a brief statement to *Malaysiakini*, WSJ through its publisher Dow Jones said it stands behind its previous reports on the supposed successor to Zeti Akhtar Aziz being an ally of the prime minister.

"We stand behind our fair and accurate reporting of this evolving story and are committed to continuing to provide robust coverage of events in Malaysia," WSJ said.

The US financial daily was responding to Najib's press aide Tengku Sharifuddin Tengku Ahmad, who said yesterday that announcement of Muhammad Ibrahim as the new Bank Negara governor [proves](#) once again WSJ's "lies and total disregard for facts" in its reporting on Malaysia.

"WSJ reported as fact multiple times, including by Ken Brown on April 20 and Tom Wright on March 11, that the prime minister appointed Irwan Serigar Abdullah to be the new governor and that he was linked to 1MDB.

"This was despite no announcement having been made, and based on anonymous sources," Tengku Sharifuddin said yesterday.

Muhammad Ibrahim begins his duties on May 1 after Zeti retires at the end of this month.

However, the US daily in a report today claimed the decision to appoint Muhammad Ibrahim instead of Irwan was a "U-turn" made out of pressure.

“The shift came after Zeti, who is stepping down at the end of the month, pressured the government to appoint someone from within the bank to succeed her, according to a person familiar with the matter,” wrote *WSJ* today.

“Attempts to reach Zeti weren’t successful. The prime minister’s office didn’t reply to a request for comment,” it added.

Pulitzer nomination for 1MDB reports

Last July, *WSJ* published documents purportedly from Malaysian investigators showing RM2.6 billion and RM42 million had been deposited into the prime minister's personal bank accounts.

Since then, it has published a series of articles linking the funds to 1MDB, which are often cited by Mahathir and the prime minister's critics in pushing for Najib's removal.

The publication was recently nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of the scandal, but did not win the coveted award.

Najib's critics have repeatedly challenged the prime minister to live up to his threat to sue *WSJ* over the allegedly false reports.

Najib has repeatedly denied abusing public funds for personal gain, and following the *WSJ* report, the government eventually claimed the RM2.6 billion was a political donation from a Saudi royalty.