

Pua connects the dots, says Najib is 'Malaysian Official 1'
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There is no doubt that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is the individual referred to as 'Malaysian Official 1' in the civil lawsuit the US Department of Justice (DOJ) filed yesterday, said lawmaker Tony Pua today.

"There can be no other official than Najib who was cleared (of wrongdoing by the Malaysian attorney-general)," the DAP national publicity secretary told a press conference at the party's headquarters today.

Although the court documents do not identify Malaysian Official 1, Pua said it describes the individual as a person with authority in the government.

Malaysian Official 1 had the authority to approve all appointments to, and removal from, 1MDB's board of directors and 1MDB's senior management team, according to the documents.

Article 117 of 1MDB's memorandum of articles of association states that only Najib has such powers, said Pua.

He added that page 75, paragraph 263 of the document states that attorney-general Mohamed Apandi Ali had cleared Malaysian Official 1 in the inquiry on US\$681 million.

The Petaling Jaya Utara parliamentarian called on Apandi to explain the latter's claim that the money channelled into Najib's accounts was from an Arab donor.

The documents from DOJ showed that the US\$681 million originated from a US\$3 billion bond 1MDB raised.

From the bond, US\$1.592 billion was diverted into an account belonging to Tanore Finance Corporation, which was then pumped in the US\$681 million to 'Malaysian Official 1'.

"Where is the Arab donor here as claimed by Apandi?" asked Pua.

"I call on Apandi to charge Najib for grand theft or he should resign if he is not willing to do so, while we find others who are capable to bring the charge against Malaysian Official 1, who is clearly Najib," he added.

Pua also said that Tanore Finance Corporation is owned by Malaysian Eric Tan Kim Leong, who is an associate of Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low.

PAC chief urged to quit

Pua also called on Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairperson Hasan Arifin to resign for clearing Najib of any wrongdoing.

Pua, who sits on the bipartisan parliamentary committee, said it could not conduct a thorough probe on the prime minister as 1MDB refused to release its financial accounts to them.

"Without the statements of accounts how are we to investigate?" he asked.

He added that the court documents clearly show that three tranches of payment were made to Najib, the largest being the US\$681 million made between March 21 and 25, 2013, just before the 13th general election.

He said the two other payments amounting to US\$50 million were made earlier, namely US\$20 million between Feb 23 and June 13, 2011, and US\$30 million sometime between May to December 2012.

According to the documents, all this money came from 1MDB, he said.

Day of infamy

Meanwhile DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang said the Department of Justice's press conference on 1MDB was the most humiliating experience for him.

"It has in fact turned out into a day of infamy, a day when all Malaysians who love the nation can only cringe in shame and cry as to why their beloved country had been brought so low as to suffer such international humiliation," he said.

The Gelang Patah MP also cast doubt on a statement from the PM's press secretary, Tengku Sarifuddin Tengku Ahmad, that the government will fully cooperate with any lawful investigation of Malaysian companies.

Lim said the opposite seems to be true, with the auditor-general report on 1MDB classified under the Official Secrets Act, a deputy prime minister and senior minister removed, and personnel in enforcement agencies transferred.

When asked what Malaysians should do next, given Najib's grip on the government, Pua said he would ask those around the prime minister whether they were willing to stand beside an alleged thief.

He said they must rise up and take action, while Lim asked if anyone would deny the Department of Justice's claim that the money allegedly misappropriated is from Malaysia.

“What if the properties are successfully seized and money recovered and returned. Are we to deny that when this is returned that this is ours?” he asked.

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