

Najib: DOJ lawsuit doesn't involve me

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said today a recent lawsuit by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) does not involve him, the Malaysian government or sovereign wealth fund 1MDB directly.

Last month, US attorney-general Loretta Lynch announced a civil action seeking the recovery of more than US\$1 billion worth of assets linked to a conspiracy to launder funds taken from 1MDB.

Najib has come under attack from the opposition and sections of the public over allegations of corruption linked to the debt-laden 1MDB and deposits into his personal account worth around US\$680 million.

He has denied any wrongdoing and maintains that the source of the money was not 1MDB. He has also said those funds were not used for personal gain.

Attorney-general Mohamed Apandi Ali has said the money was a gift from the Saudi royal family, and most of it was subsequently returned.

"I want to say that what was done by the DOJ recently does not involve me, or the Malaysian government, or 1MDB directly," Najib told Indonesian television station *Metro TV*. "The suit named five people."

"This is not a criminal suit, but a civil suit," said Najib, who was on a visit to the Indonesian capital. The 1MDB issue is a business issue but it has been politicised by "certain enemies", he added.

When asked about his relationship with Dr Mahathir Mohamad, one of his staunchest critics, Najib said the former Malaysian premier is "obsessed about control".

"Mahathir did strongly support me in the past and has been my mentor, but he has a controlling tendency," Najib said, adding that Mahathir wants to play a role in state decisions even though he is no longer prime minister.

In March, Mahathir filed a suit against Najib, alleging corruption and abuse of power.

- *Reuters*

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