

Make way for Scorpene investigations, Najib told
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak should consider a leave of absence to make way for on-going French investigations into the controversial Scorpene submarine purchased by Malaysia.

NONEPkok Sena MP Mahfuz Omar (left) added that the Malaysian government should also launch a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the deal.

"The prime minister should go on leave until both investigations are completed so that they can be done unimpeded," the PAS vice-president said during his visit today to the Defence Services Asia 2010 Exhibition and Conference held in Kuala Lumpur.

Last year, Suaram engaged three French lawyers to launch an investigation into the Scorpene deal between the Malaysian government and Amaris, a subsidiary of French defence company DCNS.

The case, filed in Paris, France, has been taken up by two officers from the Public Prosecutor's Department - Francoise Besset and Jean-Christophe Hullin - and is under investigation.

Two prosecution judges with the Paris Prosecution Department are currently investigating possible case of bribery involved in the sale of the two submarines to Malaysia.

Mahfuz said the French officers are looking into possible bribery between Amaris, a subsidiary of French naval defence giant DCNS and Perimekar Sdn Bhd, a Malaysian company involved in brokering the contract.

Perimekar was formed in 2001 as a subsidiary of KS Ombak Laut Sdn Bhd, co-owned by Abdul Razak Baginda and his wife Mazlinda, and earned some 114 million Euros (RM486.7 million) in the Scorpene deal.

Ownership of Perimekar has since been taken over by Boustead Holdings Bhd.

"They (Perimekar) earned 114 million Euros for what they claim was coordination and support work.

"That makes up around 11 per cent of the total cost of the submarines and forced the company (DCNS) to mark up the price of the submarines.

"The government must form a Royal Commission of Inquiry to investigate this case with transparency and restore Malaysia's credibility in the eyes of the public and the international community," Mahfuz said.

Mahfuz also demanded that the government explain its recent purchase of eight Aermacchi MD339D training jets with no engines from Italian company Alenia Aermacchi, at the cost of 88.8 million Euros (RM379.1 million).

"When I double-checked with the deputy (Defence) minister (Dr Abdul Latif Ahmad), he confirmed it and told me they decided not to take the engines because the government

couldn't afford it.

"Whether they took the planes with engines or not is not an issue, but why is it that the Eriterian Air Force paid just US8.8 million (RM28.09 million) each for the same plane with engine," Mahfuz said.

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