

**No need for MACC to probe Scorpene deal: Zahid**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**July 01, 2010**

Defence Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said there was no necessity to refer the purchase of submarines to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

The purchase of the Scorpene-class submarines was in accordance with procedures, he told reporters after flagging off the 1Malaysia Expedition to London in Bangi today.

He said that the one billion euro spent to buy the French-made submarines in 2002 was approved by the cabinet.

"All the procedures for the purchase of the submarines had been adhered to," he said when asked to comment on claims that 114 million euro in commission was paid to four Malaysian companies.

Yesterday, Parliament speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia said MACC is investigating claims that RM575 million was paid as commission to Abdul Razak Baginda as part of the procurement of the submarines.

He gave that as the reason to reject a motion from the opposition for a debate on the matter.

French probe

The government has paid a whopping RM6.7 billion for the French-made submarines.

Out of the total, RM574.8 million went to Perimekar Sdn Bhd, which is owned by Abdul Razak, a known associate of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

Najib was defence minister when the deal went through.

The government has denied any commission was paid over the procurement of the submarines, saying the amount - which represents 10 percent of the submarines' total price of RM4.85 billion - was for "coordination and support services provided to the Royal Malaysian Navy".

The payment is currently being investigated by the French authorities as such "commissions" are illegal under French laws.

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