

Bar raises questions on AG-Shahidan affair
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Two matters on the alleged relationship between attorney-general Abdul Gani Patail and Shahidan Shafie, the proxy of former Malaysia Airlines chairperson Tajuddin Ramli, need to be clarified, the Bar Council says.

NONE Bar Council chairperson Ragnath Kesavan (right) said the first was whether someone had paid for the recent haj trip of Abdul Gani and his family. The second is whether the payment was a form of gratification of sorts for doing, or not doing, something.

"These are the two issues in question. I am not sure whether Abdul Gani should answer them, but we feel it would depend solely on him to respond," he told Malaysiakini.

"I even recall that similar issues were raised when Kelantan Menteri Besar Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat was allegedly offered a haj trip by a company."

Ragnath said he was aware of the photographs of Abdul Gani's visit to Shahidan's house for the funeral of the latter's son, posted on the Malaysia Today website.

"There were many other people there, not only Abdul Gani, and this should not be an issue," he said.

Asked about any possibility of a relationship between Abdul Gani and Shahidan that would have prompted the "no action" against Tajudin, Ragnath dismissed it as just a rumour.

lingam tape panel meeting 031007 abdul gani patail Abdul Gani (left) and Shahidan refused to respond to these allegations when questioned yesterday, with both of them saying no comment.

Social Care Foundation chairperson Robert Phang Miow Sin, who is also a member of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's consultative and advisory panel, has called on Abdul Gani to go on record to clear several allegations made on the Malaysia Today website over adverse public speculations about his relationship with Shahidan.

This follows allegations that the AG had decided not to take action against Tajuddin despite recommendations made by the former director of the Bukit Aman Commercial Crime Investigation Department, Ramli Yusof.

Situation different from the Lingam-Eusoff affair

The Bar Council chairperson also said the situation in this case differed from the alleged VK Lingam and former lord president Eusoff Chin affair.

In that case, Ragnath said, Lingam had appeared before Eusoff and other judges in a court matter, and they were seen together in New Zealand. This, Ragnath said, had raised questions.

The revelation of the Lingam and Eusoff affair had resulted in the Bar Council crying foul of the senior lawyer and the former lord president. But, it was only after a video recording of the "Lingam affair" (looks like me, sounds like me) did they have a chance to raise questions at a Royal Commission of Inquiry.

vk lingam aca lingam tape 211107 mediaLingam (left) had represented tycoon Vincent Tan in a lawsuit against veteran journalist MGG Pillai, whose appeal in the Federal Court, the country's highest court, was heard by a panel headed by Eusoff.

"In the present case, there is no proven link. What if there is no link at all to these allegations," Ragunath said.

Without such evidence, he said, the Bar Council would not be critical about the allegations made, unless Shahidan's role in the affair was proven.

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