

RM380b lost through graft over 20 years, Parliament told
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Fauwaz Abdul Aziz

The Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) has investigated thousands of cases of alleged corruption involving RM270 million over the past 17 years.
MCPX

According to Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz, ACA had probed cases involving a total of RM270.471 million between 1991 and April 2008.

This involved 13,309 cases that had been brought to the attention of ACA, he said in answering a question from Lim Guan Eng (DAP-Bagan).

Lim however pointed out the losses through corruption was significantly higher than the RM270 million investigated by ACA.

penang lim guan eng pc lim guan eng 200608 02He told Parliament that international investments and finances services giant Morgan Stanley had in 2004 estimated that as much as US\$100 billion (then RM380 billion) had been squandered through corruption over the past two decades.

"Does it (the figure Nazri quoted) show that the government is not serious? Because it is not as small as RM270 million as was said," said Lim.

Nazri, however, sidestepped the issue by saying that to tackle corruption, the government needs cooperation from all quarters.

"If Morgan Stanley has more information than us, then you can advise Morgan Stanley to inform us (what they know) so that we can (act)," said Nazri, to hoots of approval from other Barisan Nasional Mps.

Drastic fall in TI ranking

Lim also asked Nazri on Malaysia's fall in ranking from 23 in 1995 to 43 last year in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index.

transparency international corruption perception index ranking and score for malaysia 240608In response, Nazri reiterated the government's contention that the reason for the plunge was because of the additional countries that have been added in the index.

There were 163 countries surveyed in 2006, while 180 countries were part of the index last year, and this has affected Malaysia's overall position, said Nazri.

Nazri also denied that the fall was as drastic as claimed by Lim.

Nevertheless, he added that the government "will try to find ways" on how to raise its ranking.

Nazri also disclosed that Malaysia had met all but two of 71 anti-corruption measures as

stipulated in the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

One of the two measures, said Nazri, pertain to the UNCAC's recommendation for its signatories to criminalise bribery of foreign civil servants and officials of international companies.

111007The matter had been delayed due to the government's move to put into place the Malaysian Commission of Anti-Corruption as well as a Whistleblowers Protection Act, Nazri added.

Although these two conditions have not been satisfied, Malaysia will be ratifying the UNCAC, he said.

The situation in the House began to unravel when Khairy Jamaluddin (BN-Rembau) stood up to ask Nazri an additional question.

He referred to the controversy over alleged abuse of power committed by Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim's special officer Yahya Sahri.

Khairy asked whether it was appropriate for the Selangor menteri besar - who was present in the House in his capacity as Bandar Tun Razak MP - to have 'cleared' his subordinate officials before the ACA had completed its investigations.

Yahya is currently under investigations into claims that he had abused his power in the award of cleaning contracts in Petaling Jaya.

One week after the allegations emerged, Khalid had brushed off the claims, stressing that none of his top state officials were involved in graft.

Yahya was yesterday suspended from official duties for two months pending the ACA probe. However, he resigned yesterday evening from his post as the MB's special officer as well as PKR's state secretary.

KJ attacks PKR's bank account

Khairy asked Nazri: "Is this the standard of good governance when a person of the (Menteri Besar's) office speaks on behalf of the ACA?"

"As ACA has not issued any statements, it is as if he is trying to absolve himself (of blame)," said Khairy, to a barrage of protests from the opposition Pakatan Rakyat Mps.

230608 02Not letting up, however, Khairy let fly the allegation that PKR had directed all monetary contributions by the party's "crony companies" to the state government's '100 Days' celebration at Shah Alam Stadium last Friday to be placed directly into its bank account instead of the state coffers.

By this time, scores of Pakatan MPs were standing up and shouting in protest.

N Gobalakrishnan (PKR-Padang Serai), among them, was heard amidst the din shouting: "What about the ECM Libra scandal?" in reference to the Khairy's former investment firm which was itself embroiled in controversy.

Khalid then stood up to ask deputy speaker Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar to be allowed to speak.

However, Junaidi turned him down and directed Nazri to answer Khairy's questions.

"We are only tested when we are in power," said Nazri, adding that nobody is authorised to speak on behalf of the ACA on a matter which was still under investigations. He declined to comment further on the matter.

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