

Nazri defends PM's style

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DECISIONS by the Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi administration are above board and always in the national interest.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Aziz urged detractors of the government not to look for skeletons in the Prime Minister's closet.

Citing doubts among some MPs about Khazanah Nasional Bhd's recent acquisition of a large stake in Parkway Holdings as an example, he said it was not a bailout.

He said the deal was based on agreements between the government investment arm and the company managing the nation's biggest healthcare firm, Pantai Holdings Bhd.

"The transaction was beneficial to both parties. All decisions, whether related to the sale or purchase of Parkway shares, are made in the national interest," he said when winding up points raised by MPs during the debate on Budget 2007.

Nazri said government approval of the sale of Parkway Holdings shares had not affected the integrity of the Abdullah administration.

Speaking at length on points raised with regard to Abdullah's style of administration, he said the Prime Minister's statement on Scomi Bhd should also be accepted without reservations.

He said no projects were given to Scomi with Abdullah's knowledge and that the Prime Minister was not personally involved in deciding on projects or concessions to the company.

"The Prime Minister is a leader of high integrity and highly concerned over allegations that he had lied to the people over the issue of his son and Scomi Bhd," he said.

Nazri said Abdullah, as a leader of integrity, was willing to apologise if what he had said in the inter-

view was wrong.

He told the house that Abdullah had asked all parties to study what was said during the interview besides looking into facts like the scope of business of Scomi and the experience it had in its chosen field before making allegations.

The minister, describing such allegations as politically-motivated, said the perpetrators had tried to confuse Malaysians.

He said the Prime Minister had also reiterated that his son-in-law, Khairy Jamaluddin, did not influence decisions involving the management of the country.

"If Khairy's feedback is needed, it will be based on his capacity as

Umno Youth deputy chief and not as a member of the Prime Minister's family," he said.

Nazri denied that Abdullah had been slow in his reaction to racial issues, especially on Khairy's recent statement on the predicament of Malays in Penang.

"The Prime Minister had directed Khairy to personally explain his statement, which was said to have offended the Chinese community. Although the issue is still hot, racial unity in this country is still strong and unaffected by the issue."

He said Abdullah had repeatedly advised all parties not to fan racial sentiments or raise sensitive issues involving religion.