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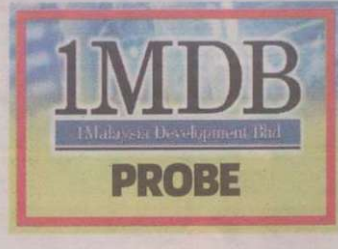
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PM gives WSJ 14 days to clarify

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'STATE YOUR STAND':
His lawyers send letter to paper to seek clarification

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak has given *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) 14 days to clarify its stand on its allegation that nearly US\$700 million (RM2.65 billion) from Malaysia Development Bhd

(IMDB) was deposited into his personal bank account.

Najib's clarification demand was sent to the board of directors of Dow Jones and Company Inc by Najib's lawyers from Messrs Hafarizam Wan and Aisha Mubarak yesterday.

The New York-based company

owns the international business daily, which published the articles "Malaysian Leader's Accounts Probed" and "Scandal in Malaysia" on July 2 and 6.

Najib's lead counsel Datuk Mohd Hafarizam Harun, who signed the emailed letter, wanted WSJ to state whether it took the position that Najib misappropriated IMDB's monies.

Hafarizam said this was necessary as the articles contained "a plethora of convoluted, scurrilous and vague allegations against our client".

"In the circumstances, we are instructed to seek confirmation as to whether it is your position as taken in the articles that our client

misappropriated nearly US\$700 million from IMDB.

"We are instructed to procure your position because the articles collectively suggest that you are unsure of the original source of the money and what happened to the money while on the other hand, the general gist of the articles create a clear impression that our client has misappropriated about US\$700 million belonging to IMDB.

"In the circumstance and in the interests of our client, we would expect a newspaper of your international standing and reputation to state unequivocally and with clarity as to whether it is your contention that our client misap-

propriated about US\$700 million belonging to IMDB."

Hafarizam said the confirmation was being sought so that he would be able to advise Najib on the appropriate legal recourse that could be taken to seek redress.

The lawyers demanded a reply to the letter within 14 days from yesterday.

They also asked to be informed of whether WSJ had appointed solicitors in Malaysia to accept service of legal proceedings on its behalf and the reporters who wrote the articles "in the event that legal proceedings become necessary".

The WSJ articles were written by Simon Clark and Tom Wright.