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# Swiss Press Malaysia Over 1MDB

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By JOHN LETZING

ZURICH—Swiss authorities said they are trying to advance an investigation into the alleged misappropriation of billions of dollars from a Malaysian state investment fund but haven't received help from their Malaysian counterparts.

Switzerland's Office of the Attorney General said in a statement on Wednesday that its probe, begun in August last year, had uncovered an alleged "Ponzi scheme" at the fund, 1Malaysia Development Bhd., or 1MDB.

The office said it recently made an additional request for legal assistance from Malaysia. An earlier request for help, transmitted in January, is "still pending," the statement said. A spokesman for Malaysia's attorney general couldn't immediately be reached.

1MDB is the focus of investigations in a number of countries. In July, the U.S. Justice Department filed civil lawsuits to seize assets, including property in Los Angeles and New York, that it said was purchased with some of the \$3.5 billion allegedly misappropri-



**Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak set up 1MDB in 2009.**

ated from 1MDB.

Swiss prosecutors have been working with U.S. authorities, as well as investigators in Singapore, Luxembourg and other jurisdictions where money allegedly flowed. But Malaysia hasn't cooperated, Swiss authorities say.

Last summer, Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak,

who set up the fund in 2009, fired his previous attorney general, who was leading an investigation into 1MDB. The Wall Street Journal has reported that the new attorney general subsequently declined to act on advice from the central bank to open a criminal case against the fund's management over missing invest-

ments, saying there was insufficient evidence to do so.

Global investigators believe that more than \$1 billion originating from 1MDB landed in Mr. Najib's bank accounts, the Journal has reported.

Mr. Najib has denied any wrongdoing. 1MDB has denied wrongdoing and has said it is cooperating with authorities. The Malaysian attorney general said part of the money that entered the prime minister's accounts was a legal donation from Saudi Arabia, and that most of it was returned.

The Swiss authorities said it appears that \$800 million has been misappropriated from investments made by SRC International, a unit of Malaysia's finance ministry that formerly was part of 1MDB, and that a "Ponzi scheme" may have helped to conceal the misappropriation of funds from both SRC and 1MDB.

The aim of the latest Swiss request of Malaysia is to "obtain further evidence in corroboration of the latest findings," the Swiss attorney general's office said.

—Tom Wright contributed to this article.

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