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Banks pressed to assist global inquiries into Malaysia's state investment fund

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International investigators are seeking information from banks as part of a widening probe into the financial scandal around Malaysia's 1MDB state investment fund.

Officials from the US Department of Justice have asked Deutsche Bank and JPMorgan for records giving details of

transactions involving 1MDB as part of the US regulatory inquiry into the fund.

The global banks are not accused of any wrongdoing, according to people familiar with the matter, but have been asked to disclose information as big providers of international payment transactions. Both these banks facilitated transfers for 1MDB and linked entities, along with other foreign financial insti-

tutions. Deutsche Bank and JPMorgan declined to comment.

Luxembourg has opened a probe into a case being investigated in at least four other countries, while Singapore said it had asked for data from "a number" of institutions as part of its inquiry.

The news highlights the complex international dealings linked to 1MDB that have spawned corruption claims and embroiled Najib Razak, prime minister and chair of the fund's advisory board. Swiss investigators have said they found "serious indications" that \$4bn had been misappropriated from Malaysian state companies. Both the fund and Mr Najib deny wrongdoing.

The Luxembourg state prosecutor said late on Thursday that it had launched an investigation after finding "concrete clues" of misappropriation of 1MDB-related funds through accounts in Singapore, Switzerland and Luxembourg. It said it was probing four transfers from 2012 and one from 2013, which totalled several hundred million dollars and ended up in the Luxembourg bank account of an offshore com-

pany. The transactions were linked to two bond issues in May and October 2012. The Monetary Authority of Singapore said it had asked several institutions for information as part of a review of fund flows suspected of being linked to the 1MDB affair. It said it was co-operating with overseas authorities in the case, which is also being probed in the US and Hong Kong.

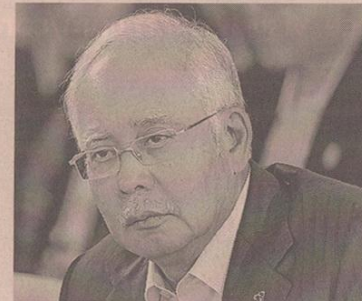
1MDB has said its internal investigations have uncovered no evidence of crimes. Malaysia's attorney-general has

said Mr Najib has no case to answer over transfers in 2013 of \$680m to his personal bank account, adding that the money was a donation from the Saudi royal family. The prime minister has denied the money is linked to 1MDB.

The fresh front opened by Luxembourg underscores the many unanswered questions about 1MDB's worldwide dealings from the Gulf to the Cayman Islands. The fund ran up more than \$11bn in debts and sold off much of its power and property assets last year to resolve a cash flow crisis.

Goldman Sachs had the most high-profile involvement of any bank with 1MDB, arranging \$6.5bn of bond deals for the fund in 2012 and 2013. US authorities are investigating Goldman's role in financial transactions linked to 1MDB as part of a broader probe into payments made to Mr Najib and property sales in New York and elsewhere, people familiar with the matter say. Goldman has not been accused of any wrongdoing.

Additional reporting by Jeevan Vasagar in Singapore and Peter Spiegel in Brussels



Najib Razak: says \$680m transfer to him came from Saudi royal family

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£111,000 (09/03/16); £112,000 (23/02/16); £127,500 (12/02/16)

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