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# Malaysia Antigraft Chief Quits Amid Probe

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Official had pressed government to charge premier over his role in the 1MDB scandal

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KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia announced the resignation of the chief of its anticorruption agency, which has been carrying out an investigation into state investment fund 1Malaysia Development Bhd. and at one point advised the country's top prosecutor to bring criminal charges against Prime Minister Najib Razak.

Chief secretary to the government Ali Hamsa said in a statement Thursday that Abu Kassim Mohamed, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's chief commissioner,

asked to end his term on Aug. 1, and that the government accepted his decision.

Mr. Abu Kassim will continue to serve as an anticorruption officer until his mandatory retirement in 2020, the chief secretary said.

Under the helm of Mr. Abu Kassim, the antigraft agency has been one of the lead investigators into a long-running probe into 1Malaysia Development, known as 1MDB, which was created by Mr. Najib in 2009 as a way to boost economic growth.

Investigators in at least seven countries are probing 1MDB. Some investigators have said they believe that \$6 billion has gone missing from the fund. Mr. Najib and 1MDB have repeatedly denied wrongdoing, and 1MDB has said it is cooperating with the investigations. Malaysia's attorney general, Mohamed

Apandi Ali, cleared Mr. Najib of wrongdoing in January.

A person familiar with the matter said Mr. Abu Kassim's decision to resign was a result of pressure from Mr. Najib.

Mr. Abu Kassim, who couldn't be reached directly, told Malaysian reporters on Thursday that he wasn't withdrawing under pressure and that he had requested to end his contract earlier to take up another opportunity, according to a report by state-run news agency Bernama.

The prime minister's office didn't respond to a request to comment on Thursday.

The commission, which is an independent agency, said in its statement that this was the third time Mr. Abu Kassim has requested to step down before his contract was due to expire on Dec. 4, 2018.

"No pressure was made by



Billboard shows 1MDB, which was investigated by the antigraft agency.

any quarter resulting in Mr. Abu Kassim's decision to shorten his contract," the antigraft commission said in its statement.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission had

asked the nation's attorney general to file criminal charges against Mr. Najib over \$14 million he received in his accounts in 2014 and 2015 via entities linked to 1MDB, a person familiar with

the matter told The Wall Street Journal earlier this year.

When Mr. Apandi, the attorney general, cleared Mr. Najib of wrongdoing, he said the prime minister hadn't been aware of the transfers of the \$14 million and hadn't given his approval for them.

The anticorruption agency's operations review panel recommended in February that the body continue with its investigations, according to a statement the agency issued at the time.

Mr. Ali, the secretary to the government, thanked Mr. Abu Kassim for his service in Thursday's announcement.

"The government expresses its gratitude to Mr. Abu Kassim who has served the country well in his capacity as the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission chief commissioner," Mr. Ali said.

OLIVIA HARRIS/REUTERS