

RM10M CAN'T BE RELEASED FOR NOW, MACC CHIEF TELLS DR M

Probe still on and clarity needed over NGO's accountable use of public donations, he says

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THE Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has responded to former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's assertion that it should release the RM10 million held in the frozen Aman Palestin bank accounts to help Palestinians.

MACC Chief Commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki said investigations into the non-governmen-

tal organisation's (NGO) accounts were ongoing and funds could not be released.

"MACC is still investigating the veracity of previous transactions and claims," he said yesterday.

"In view of this, MACC cannot simply release the funds until all investigations are completed and clarity is obtained over the accountable use of public donations amounting to millions.

"As the main anti-corruption enforcement body, MACC views this case seriously as it is a matter of public interest and will likely set a precedent on how public donations can and cannot be used."

On Thursday, Dr Mahathir took

to X, formerly Twitter, to express his views and concerns on the matter, asking for MACC to release RM10 million held in Aman Palestin's accounts to help people in Gaza as they brace for winter.

On Oct 17, MACC launched investigations into Aman Palestin following claims of irregularities in its fundraising activities.

On Nov 23, it froze 41 bank accounts and RM15,868,762 belonging to the NGO.

Aman Palestin's premises was raided, with financial and operational documents dating back five years seized.

MACC's preliminary investigations revealed several issues involving the misappropriation of

an estimated RM70 million, which was diverted for purposes other than the objectives of the establishment of the NGO.

On Nov 27, the organisation's lawyer, Mohd Rafique Rashid Ali, said only 11 out of the 41 bank accounts frozen were used by Aman Palestin for donation purposes.

The rest, he said, belonged to Aman Palestin's strategic partners, board of directors and staff members.

He claimed that MACC's statement, which failed to specify which of the 41 accounts were suspended, constituted malicious slander that intended to tarnish the organisation's reputation.

Rafique also said that this had halted the donation of around RM10 million towards Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen as the people there prepared for the winter.



Tan Sri Azam Baki