

MACC: ISMAIL SABRIA SUSPECT IN GRAFT CASE

Ex-PM to be quizzed tomorrow in probe by graft-busters into money Laundering, says Azam

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FORMER prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob is a suspect in a money laundering probe, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said.

Chief Commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki said Ismail Sabri would be called in again for questioning tomorrow, depending on his health condition.

He said Ismail Sabri would be asked to provide details on assets he had declared in February.

"He is considered a suspect. We want to seek clarification from him after we found the cash. He was among the individuals said to be linked to it," he said at a press conference yesterday.

"He was asked in November to declare his assets. He did so on Feb 19.

"To date, we have taken statements from 31 witnesses in connection with the probe."

Azam said MACC would record statements from seven or eight people this week and next week.

When asked, he said besides the four former officers and Ismail Sabri, there were no other persons of interest or suspects in the probe. MACC questioned the Bera member of parliament for five hours last Tuesday.

He was brought in for questioning to assist in an investigation into the hundreds of millions of ringgit spent by his administration on promotions and publicity.

On Saturday, he was reported to have collapsed at his home. He was hospitalised for blood pressure issues.

Ismail Sabri was prime minister from 2021 to 2022, making him Malaysia's shortest-serving leader.

The four former aides who were arrested — two of whom are believed to hold "Datuk" titles — were released on bail after their remand period ended.

Azam said MACC had yet to

freeze Ismail Sabri's nor Yayasan Keluarga Malaysia's accounts.

"We have yet to freeze Yayasan Keluarga Malaysia's accounts because it is not an individual account and remains active, while Ismail Sabri's account is still under investigation.

"We have requested an explanation from him about all the accounts involved."

He said 13 bank accounts belonging to several individuals, totalling RM2 million, had been frozen as part of the corruption and money laundering probe.

He said most of the accounts belonging to suspects detained by MACC had been frozen.

Azam said MACC had recorded statements from several senior officials who served under Ismail Sabri during his tenure as prime minister, including his former private secretary.

The investigation is being carried out under Section 16A of the MACC Act 2009 and the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001.

The *New Straits Times* was unable to obtain comments from Ismail Sabri and his representatives at press time.