

PROBE INTO DR M'S U.K. ASSET

MACC has signed mutual legal assistance deal with British authorities, say sources

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THE Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) signed a mutual legal assistance agreement with United Kingdom authorities in December last year as part of efforts to probe assets owned by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the country.

The deal was inked with the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA).

Sources said the collaboration would allow MACC to seek assistance to investigate assets linked to Dr Mahathir, his family and associates.

They said MACC had previously held several meetings with the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre (IACCC), a unit under the NCA based in London, in relation to the case.

"MACC is now awaiting the official list of assets from UK authorities," said a source, adding that investigators were also tracing assets in Canada, Switzerland and Japan.

"Once the complete information is obtained, that could lead to legal proceedings for the seizure and forfeiture of identified assets, as was done in the case involving Tun Daim Zainuddin," said one source.

The source also noted that tracing and repatriating assets believed to have been misappropriated was neither simple nor quick, as it involved international legal instruments and cooperation with foreign enforcement bodies.

"However, the investigation will continue transparently to ensure that all illegally acquired assets can

be returned to the country," the source added.

MACC Chief Commissioner Tan Sri Azam Baki said investi-

gation into assets owned by Dr Mahathir was ongoing.

"If the information can be obtained, we will announce it later," he said at the commission's headquarters here yesterday.

Earlier in the year, it was reported that graft busters were satisfied with the asset declarations made by two of Dr Mahathir's sons.

Tan Sri Mokhzani Mahathir declared total assets amounting to approximately RM1 billion, with a personal value of RM316 million, while brother Mirzan declared assets amounting to RM246.2 million, with a personal value of RM120 million.

Meanwhile, Azam said the deputy public prosecutor's office had yet to decide on whether to press charges in the graft probe involving former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob and his former political secretary, Datuk Mohammad Anuar Mohd Yunus.

He said the matter was under consideration, adding that the process to transfer the forfeited RM169 million into the government's consolidated fund

began yesterday.

"The funds should be back in government coffers soon. The deputy public prosecutor has not decided whether to prosecute anyone in the case. Our investigation has been completed."

It was reported that Ismail Sabri and Anuar would not contest the prosecution's application to forfeit the RM169 million cash seized.

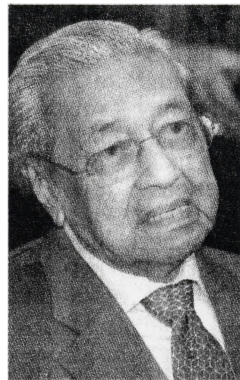
On another case, Azam said his officers had completed their investigations into businessman Datuk Seri Farhash Wafa Salvador Rizal Mubarak over a mineral exploration case in Sabah.

"Our investigation involved calling in all those connected to the matter, and we also recorded statements from Sabah Mineral Management Sdn Bhd, the state government and others said to be involved.

"In the end, the deputy public prosecutor decided there was no criminal case to be pursued against anyone, whether under the MACC Act 2009, the Penal Code, or governance issues. Therefore, the case is closed," he said.



Tan Sri Azam Baki



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad