

Mat Zain: Dropping Tajuddin suits raises doubt over Umno funds
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 — A former senior police investigator has questioned Putrajaya's directive for all GLCs to drop civil suits worth billions of ringgit against Tan Sri Tajuddin Ramli, stating that the move raises the question of whether hundreds of millions of ringgit were being held by Umno nominees.

Datuk Mat Zain Ibrahim wrote in an article sent to The Malaysian Insider that the former MAS chairman held RM70 million in trust for Tun Daim Zainuddin (picture) who was finance minister during Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's administration.

"The question of whether the money belonged to Tun Daim, or was shared with someone else or if it belonged to Umno will become an issue. In short, the public has the right to raise 1,001 questions on this issue," said the former city CID chief.

Putrajaya had directed earlier this month all government-linked companies, including Malaysia Airlines and the national debt restructuring company Danaharta, to cease all civil suits against Tajuddin, a poster boy of the Mahathir-era plan to groom Bumiputera entrepreneurs.

Mat Zain today cited his privileged position as the investigating officer in 1995 when an unnamed minister and Umno supreme council member asked police to investigate money held in trust by another of Daim's nominees, former Renong chairman Tan Sri Halim Saad.

"A few months before the 9th general election, several top Umno leaders were concerned that the hundreds of millions of ringgit controlled by Halim Saad would fall into the hands of a third party," he wrote.

Mat Zain, who led the probe into former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's 1998 black-eye case, said that Tajuddin and Halim were among three Daim proteges named by Anwar in police reports made in 1999 alleging that Daim had received bribes worth hundreds of millions of ringgit while he was finance minister.

Mat Zaid added that included in the report were letters signed by Halim, Tajuddin and former Maybank chief executive Tan Sri Wan Azmi Wan Hamzah stating that they held RM117 million in shares, RM70 million in cash and RM150 million in cash for Daim respectively.

He said that in the course of his investigations, he believed all three letters to be genuine and the minister who asked police to initiate the 1995 probe into Halim did not deny the truth of the letters.

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