

Taking 1MDB fight abroad is sabotage, IGP says

Malay Mail Online

September 21, 2015

Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan (right) is seen with his lawyer, Matthias Chang, after the Immigration Department barred the former Umno leader from leaving the country, September 18, 2015. — Picture courtesy of Khairuddin Abu Hassan's Facebook page

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 21 — Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan's attempt to solicit foreign investigations into 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) was an act of sabotage and a danger to Malaysia's economy and sovereignty, said the Inspector-General of Police.

Responding to allegations that the police were being used by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to silence critics of 1MDB, Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar said Khairuddin's actions were also a disservice to the country's law enforcement agencies.

The IGP insisted that the former Umno leader, who is now in remand, should have provided any evidence in his possession to local investigators for their own use, given that he initially lodged a report against the firm here in Malaysia.

"Instead, he still chose to use foreign legal avenues, particularly Britain, Hong Kong, France and the United States with the purpose of applying international pressure on Malaysia.

"This is clearly an act intended to challenge Malaysia's legal system, damage the credibility of local enforcement agencies, and invite foreign interference into the country's democratic system," Khalid said in a statement last night.

Beyond investigating Khairuddin under Section 124 (C) of the Penal Code for activities detrimental to parliamentary democracy, the IGP said police are also checking to see if the information the former Umno leader presented to foreign agencies was false.

He then pointed out that the Royal Malaysia Police was not the only agency here investigating 1MDB, rejecting PAS MP Datuk Mahfuz Omar's claim that Khairuddin's arrest was meant to prevent him from exposing details on the firm's alleged wrongdoings.

Khairuddin was arrested on Friday, the day he was reportedly due to fly to New York in the US to meet with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and was remanded a further six days on Saturday.

Prior to his arrest, Khairuddin claimed that he was barred from leaving the country by the Immigration Department.

The former deputy chief of the Umno Batu Kawan division had been on a global tour to solicit investigations by other countries into 1MDB.

The *Wall Street Journal* yesterday reported that the FBI has opened an investigation into entities linked to 1MDB, although an agency spokesman told the US daily that it did not have any scheduled engagements with Khairuddin.

The FBI investigation is the latest announced on 1MDB by a foreign country, and joins ongoing probes in Switzerland, the SAR of Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, and Singapore.

The *WSJ* has published a series of reports detailing dubious activity allegedly involving 1MDB, beginning with an exposé in July on the US\$700 million deposit in Najib's accounts.

It followed up last month with another report alleging that US\$1.4 billion in payments from 1MDB to a UAE sovereign fund was missing from the Middle Eastern firm's accounts.

The July report, in particular, appeared to trigger a series of events in Malaysia that eventually led to the amount being declared a donation from the Middle East while local investigations into 1MDB were also either suspended or repurposed.

Najib has denied any impropriety over the US\$700 million (RM2.9 billion) donation, which was described as a political donation to the Umno party that he heads.

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