

PKR reveals more losses for Tabung Haji in deal with oil and gas company

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By Jennifer Gomez

Lembaga Tabung Haji has also incurred millions of ringgit in losses from another investment with an oil and gas company, PKR said today, even before questions about the pilgrims' fund's purchase of land from debt-ridden 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

Tabung Haji's purchase of shares from oil and gas support services counter Ramunia Holdings Bhd, resulting in losses based on the current price of its shares, had gone unnoticed, PKR lawmaker Rafizi Ramli (pic, right) said today when debating the Capital Markets and Services (Amendment) Bill 2015 in the Dewan Rakyat.

The Pandan MP said that in 2007, Tabung Haji had progressively bought shares in Ramunia Holdings, and by the end of 2008 held 25% of the company's shares, which it purchased for between RM1 and RM1.40 per share.

In June 2012, the company was renamed TH Heavy Engineering to reflect the fund's interest in the company.

Currently, the shares are trading at 30 sen per share, Rafizi said, which meant that Tabung Haji had incurred losses worth millions of ringgit from this one investment alone.

Rafizi said the minister in charge of Tabung Haji should explain the pilgrims' fund's huge losses to depositors. The fund is used by Muslims to perform the haj or pilgrimage in Mecca.

"So when we debate this bill, we can talk about the technical aspects until 5am, but what needs to be done is to ensure that those who cause public funds to suffer such losses should be prosecuted," he told the Dewan Rakyat.

He said the bill must also be strengthened to ensure that money from public funds such as this was not invested in high-risk companies like 1MDB.

He said if such losses continued to happen, the people would lose faith not only in the prime minister, but in all elected representatives and the democratic system as well.

"I urge the prime minister not to take these issues lightly.

"We must look at improving the law to protect the people's money, not just make technical changes," Rafizi (pic, left) said.

He said he had consulted with his lawyers on legal recourse to ensure Tabung Haji and

other public funds did not make bad investments, but was told that he could only take out an injunction after the alleged bad investment had been made, and could not do anything to prevent it before it happened.

Laws on these areas therefore needed to be strengthened, the PKR MP said. – May 18, 2015.

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