

Police to uncover power abuse, leaks in Tabung Haji land deal probe
The Malaysian Insider
May 12, 2015

Police investigations into the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and Lembaga Tabung Haji land deal encompassed two aspects, namely the abuse of power and the leak of classified government information, Malay dailies reported today.

Quoting Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar, Berita Harian reported that to date investigations did not only come under the Official Secrets Act (OSA) because there were still unidentified information.

"When we receive more facts in the course of our investigation, then only we can identify the type of offences and what law should we use," he was quoted as saying.

He said investigations can also take place under the Tabung Haji Act and other relevant laws based on the evidence received.

"Investigations have started over claims that there is an abuse of power by Tabung Haji top executives in the issue regarding the land purchase.

"Today (yesterday), my officers went to Tabung Haji to scrutinise the relevant documents," he was quoted as saying.

Tabung Haji's purchase of the plot of land for RM188.5 million from 1MDB for the purpose of building a residential tower has created uproar among its depositors, some of whom even withdrew their savings at its branch in Shah Alam last Thursday.

Opposition politicians were quick to note that Tabung Haji was paying far more per square feet (psf) than what 1MDB paid at RM64 psf, when it first bought the land from the government, leading some to call the deal a "bailout" given 1MDB's massive debts.

On Saturday, the fund announced it was selling the land it purchased from 1MDB, following public outcry over the transaction.

Tabung Haji chairman Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim said prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had advised him to dispose of the land so that the fund's reputation is not "tarnished" because of its business transaction with 1MDB, and in order to respect the "sensitivity" of the depositors.

Utusan Malaysia also reported Khalid as saying that the police has to date, received two reports from Tabung Haji management and a non-governmental organisation.

Last Thursday, Tabung Haji CEO Datuk Johan Abdullah had lodged a police report about the leak of confidential documents by the blog "The Benchmark" as well as over inaccurate data.

The blog had alleged that Tabung Haji purchased two plots of land at 1MDB's Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) project for a total of RM772 million in cash, when in fact the pilgrim fund only bought a plot of land at a "discounted" price of RM188.5 million.

At the same time, Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (Abim) also lodged a police report over worries that the "doubtful" transaction between Tabung Haji and debt laden 1MDB will not be beneficial to depositors.

Meanwhile on 1MDB, Berita Harian reported Khalid as saying investigation were ongoing.

"However, we are still waiting for the Auditor-General's full report as we do not want any overlapping to happen in the course of our investigations," he said in denying claims that the police did nothing on the state investment vehicle.

He explained that the police, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Agency and the Attorney-General's Chambers met last Friday to discuss the matter.

However, he refused to reveal what was discussed.

"We cannot tell the world what are we investigating and what are the results. When the time comes, this will be revealed," he was further quoted as saying. – May 12, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/cops-uncover-power-abuse-leaks-in-th-land-deal-probe>