

Answer to Parliament, not Umno reps over 1MDB, DAP tells Najib
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As Umno grassroots leaders gather to meet the prime minister for briefing on national issues this afternoon, the DAP has challenged Datuk Seri Najib Razak to face Parliament on debt-ridden 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) and not brief Umno leaders only.

DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang said this was because the prime minister was the final approving authority for all 1MDB decisions, even if he was not responsible for the daily running of the Finance Ministry-owned investment firm.

"Najib is the final approving authority for all 1MDB decisions in law and in fact.

"Najib is responsible in law as 1MDB is a government company, and as the prime minister as well as finance minister, he must accept full and final responsibility for all of 1MDB actions although he may not be responsible for its day-to-day operations," Lim said in a statement today.

The Gelang Patah MP was commenting on a news report that Najib was scheduled to meet with Umno division information chiefs today for a briefing on 1MDB at the Putra World Trade Centre in the capital, where the party's headquarters is.

The briefing at 1.45pm is to address the recently tabled 11th Malaysia Plan, the goods and services tax (GST) and other "current issues", according to the invitation sighted by The Malaysian Insider that was sent to Umno divisions.

"The question that immediately comes to mind is why Najib, who is the final approving authority for all 1MDB decisions, in law and in fact, prepared to brief Umno division representatives but not Parliament on the 1MDB controversy?" Lim said.

The veteran DAP leader said it was clear under 1MDB's Memorandum and Articles of Association Agreement (M&A), that the prime minister had to give his written approval for any of 1MDB's deals.

Putrajaya's responses on the matter so far have been to say that Najib does not oversee the daily running of 1MDB and that he is not paid for his role as chairman of 1MDB's advisory board.

Lim and other opposition leaders have repeatedly called for the prime minister to answer to Parliament on the strategic investment firm, which has debts of RM42 billion incurred in just six years of operation.

Najib has been under fire from former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad over 1MDB's opaque dealings and debts. Critics have also said the firm's troubles and inability to pay its debts could affect Malaysia's economy.

Bank Negara, however, has said 1MDB as a single entity would not pose a systemic risk to the economy.

On March 8, Najib, who is also Umno president, held a closed-door briefing with Umno division chiefs during which he reportedly said those found guilty of committing fraud in 1MDB's operations would not be protected by the government. – June 14, 2015.

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