

EC tells Bersih to lodge report if 1MDB backed Najib's GE13 campaign
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By Mohd Farhan Darwis

The Election Commission (EC) today questioned the actions of election watchdog Bersih 2.0 which had accused it of failing to introduce necessary reforms to rein in unfettered electoral abuse and corruption, following a Wall Street Journal (WSJ) report that 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) had indirectly bankrolled the prime minister's 2013 election campaign.

EC chairman Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof said Bersih 2.0 should collate evidence and lodge reports with the relevant authorities if it felt the WSJ report had merit.

"Collect full and complete evidence and lodge a report with the police or the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission if there is any evidence of graft so that the authorities can investigate," he told The Malaysian Insider via Whatsapp today.

He said all the parties were given ample opportunities to make their case following the results of the 13th general election slightly more than two-years ago and questioned why Bersih 2.0 is still raising the same issue.

"More than 60 petitions related to GE13 were brought to court, and Bersih definitely knows the outcome.

"Why are they still raising it nearly three years after the general election?" he said.

Earlier today, PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar said the EC should immediately investigate claims that 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) indirectly bankrolled Datuk Seri Najib Razak's 2013 election campaign.

She said it would also lend credence to EC's independence should it charge Najib under the Election Offences Act 1954, specifically under Section 10(a), which covered bribery before, during and after elections with the intention to buy votes.

In its report, WSJ had said debt-ridden 1MDB had indirectly supported Najib's campaign by purchasing power assets from Genting Group in 2012 for five times more than its worth.

Genting allegedly donated part of the earnings to a foundation controlled by Najib. The WSJ said the foundation, Yayasan Rakyat 1 Malaysia (YR1M), then announced several charity projects that Najib later brought up during his campaign.

"Though set up to help underprivileged Malaysians through education and sport, this charity soon got involved in spending that appeared designed to help Najib retain power in the May 2013 election," said the WSJ.

In a response to WSJ, the Prime Minister's Office said the claims were baseless.

In an immediate response, Bersih 2.0 had condemned what it termed the manipulation of funds in GE13, and that it was even more shocking to learn that the political financing was linked to 1MDB, which was heavily scrutinised over its RM42 billion debt. – June 21, 2015.

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