

BNM refutes claims that officials leaked info to media
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Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) has lodged a police report over reports alleging that its officials leaked confidential information to the media which resulted in exposes by the Wall Street Journal on troubled 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

In a brief, terse statement, the central bank said such allegations are without basis.

"Bank Negara Malaysia strongly condemns allegations that officials of the bank leaked information to the media. Such allegations are without basis.

"In this regard, the bank has lodged a police report," it said today.

Blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin yesterday named three top BNM officials as being under investigation on suspicion of having leaked confidential information to the business newspaper.

BNM today said it will also investigate any breaches to the laws it administers.

It said it remained committed in its quest to uncover the truth in a fair and just manner.

It also stressed that it is not aligned to any faction and will not betray the public's trust.

"The bank, as part of the special task force, continues to remain committed towards achieving the objectives of the special task force. In this endeavour, the bank has full support of the special task force," it added.

The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported last month that 1MDB funds may have indirectly funded part of prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's campaign in the 2013 general election, after the firm bought overpriced power assets from the Genting Group.

Genting allegedly used part of the proceeds from the sale to make a RM35 million donation to a foundation under Najib, who then promoted projects by this charity during his election campaign, according to WSJ.

On July 2, WSJ reported that some US\$700 million (RM2.67 billion) was funnelled into two of Najib's accounts at AmBank in Kuala Lumpur, with the largest portion of the money – US\$681 million – allegedly transferred to Najib's accounts in March 2013, ahead of the May general election (GE13).

The business daily subsequently posted documents on the money flow into Najib's accounts, on the Internet to support its report.

Najib has denied taking funds for personal gain, but as finance minister and chairman of 1MDB's advisory board, he was under scrutiny over the government-owned firm's opaque dealings and RM42 billion debt incurred in just six years of operations.

A special task force comprising the Attorney-General's Chambers, police, anti-corruption authorities and Bank Negara is now probing WSJ's claim.

The task force has frozen six accounts as part of its probe and seized documents related to 17 bank accounts.

Yesterday, deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin expressed support for the task force, calling all parties to have confidence in the investigative panel. – July 12, 2015.

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