

Millions from Najib's AmBank account went to BN parties at GE13, says citizens' group
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The millions of ringgit in Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's AmBank private accounts were channelled to Barisan Nasional component parties in the run-up to the 13th general election two years ago, claimed a non-governmental organisation.

However, the Citizens For Accountable Governance Malaysia (CAGM) blamed, what it termed as "system of greasing" the ruling coalition partners and election machineries, on former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who had become Najib's staunchest critic over the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal.

"CAGM can confirm, based on court documents in our hands, that millions from Najib's AmBank accounts were actually used to 'back up' Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties in the run-up to the 2013 general elections," CAGM chairman Md Zainal Abidin said in a statement today, offering an explanation as to why so much money had been pumped into Najib's private AmBank accounts.

Besides the 13 BN component parties which he claimed were allocated an average of RM30 million to RM50 million each, he said funds were channelled to more than a dozen BN-friendly parties and NGOs, which received between RM1 million and RM8 million each.

"This system of 'greasing' the component parties and election machineries (in some cases, mercenaries) were actually put in place by Dr Mahathir and that has allowed BN to remain in power until now.

"So, in essence, Najib was 'paying' to a system that was put in motion by Mahathir to ensure the results are in favour of BN.

"The harder a victory in the elections appear to be, the more money it requires to secure a win and the 2013 general election was a very high-risk affair for BN after all," he said.

The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported last month that 1MDB funds may have indirectly funded part of the prime minister's campaign in GE13, after the firm bought overpriced power assets from the Genting Group.

Genting then 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) channelled into two of Najib's AmBank accounts in Kuala Lumpur, the largest portion of the money – US\$681 million – was transferred to Najib's accounts in March 2013, ahead of the May general election.

The business daily has since 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 is now 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 special 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.

Md Zainal claimed today that details of Najib's Ambank accounts were leaked by a senior official in the bank, who is purportedly working under instructions from a top banker.

The banker, he added, was a close friend and confidant of Mahathir.

"Dr Mahathir should not forget that Najib has to feed the mouths that came into existence only because he created them during his 22 years of iron-fisted rule," he added. – July 12, 2015.

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