

PAS never defended Najib, says party sec-gen after Haron Din's statements

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By Elizabeth Zachariah

PAS today denied that it was in support of embattled Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who is under attack over allegations that more than RM2 billion from 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) linked entities were channelled into his personal accounts.

The Islamist party's secretary-general Datuk Takiyuddin Hassan said the earlier statement from PAS spiritual leader Datuk Dr Haron Din, allegedly defending Najib against the accusations, was misconstrued.

"He was not defending Najib. PAS has never defended or condoned Najib against these allegations.

"But so far, they're allegations. What he meant was that investigations should be carried out transparently and in a wholesome way," he told reporters after attending a special meeting with opposition politicians and non-governmental organisations on 1MDB at the Parliament compound today.

This comes as the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) and whistleblower site Sarawak Report reported last week that investigations into debt-ridden 1MDB have allegedly uncovered billions of ringgit channelled into Najib's personal accounts.

In their reports, both WSJ and the Sarawak Report had quoted from documents from the 1MDB probe by the Malaysian government.

The documents allegedly showed US\$700 million (RM2.67 billion) was moved among government agencies, banks and entities linked to 1MDB, which finally ended in the prime minister's personal accounts at the AmPrivate Bank in Kuala Lumpur, in five separate deposits.

Haron reportedly said the WSJ allegation was illogical because anyone taking public funds for his own use would have a secret account for them, instead of using his personal account.

He added that there had been many reports on 1MDB and Najib but after explanations, many were found to be untrue.

His statement was reported on the front page of Mingguan Malaysia, an Umno-controlled Malay newspaper over the weekend.

Najib had also thanked Haron for his "support" and for dismissing WSJ's allegations.

Takiyuddin said although the opposition coalition of Pakatan Rakyat has ceased to exist, PAS was willing to put its differences with DAP and PKR aside to discuss the financial scandals, which, he said, were urgent and pressing matters.

"PAS's stand is that for the sake of solidarity on this issue alone, we have to forgive and forget.

"Put aside our differences as this is a very serious issue involving the interest of the people and the nation," he said.

The PAS leader said the party will not discount the possibility of attending an opposition-led meeting to discuss the matter at length.

PAS, following its party election last month, is now fully controlled by the conservative ulama faction that is pushing the Islamist party's hudud agenda.

At its annual congress, or muktamar, last month, the new PAS leadership accepted without debate a motion by its Dewan Ulama to sever ties with DAP, which had been at odds with the Islamist party over hudud. – July 7, 2015.

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