

Task force confirms Najib's accounts at AmBank, says closed before WSJ report
The Malaysian Insider
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Datuk Seri Najib Razak's bank accounts at AmBank Islamic had already been closed before The Wall Street Journal reported alleged transfers of billions of ringgit to his accounts last week, the special government task force probing the allegation said, confirming that the prime minister had two accounts there.

A statement by the task force today said the two accounts had been closed on August 30, 2013, and March 9 this year.

It said these accounts were not among the six that the task force had frozen on Monday as part of investigations into the WSJ's report.

It added that the task force had obtained the bank documents related to these accounts.

"Regarding the freeze orders issued on July 6, 2015, against six bank accounts, no bank accounts at AmBank Islamic held by the prime minister on that date were frozen because the bank accounts had already been closed on August 30, 2013, and March 9, 2015, respectively.

"The special task force has obtained bank documents related to these accounts," said the statement issued by the Attorney-General's Chambers.

This appears to be the first confirmation that Najib held two bank accounts at AmBank, as reported by the WSJ in its July 2 report which it said was sourced from documents from government investigators.

The timing of the closures comes soon after the alleged fund transfers were made.

The WSJ reported that US\$681 million (RM2.6 billion) originating from Tanore Finance, a company in the British Virgin Islands, was deposited into Najib's accounts in two transactions on March 21 and 25 in 2013, ahead of the general elections in May that year.

The task force today said one of the accounts had been closed on August 30, the same year.

Another sum of US\$11.1 million (RM42 million) originating from Finance Ministry-owned SRC International Sdn Bhd was moved in two tranches between December 2014 and February this year.

The second account was closed on March 9 this year, said the task force's statement.

The task force on Tuesday froze six accounts in relation to its investigation.

Following its announcement, sources told The Malaysian Insider three of the frozen accounts belonged to Najib, another to SRC International and one to Ihsan Perdana, a local company that was part of the RM42 million money flow.

Reporting on news of the freeze, the WSJ said the ones that had been frozen were different from the accounts it had reported on.

The WSJ also uploaded documents it used in its report which showed instructions for telegraphic transfers and charts showing the money trail.

Najib denied taking money for personal gain, but has not commented directly on the fund transfers to his accounts. Bank Negara and AmBank have also not responded to the allegations.

The task force statement today said that the documents being investigated had been provided by the group itself and were not the ones the WSJ had published.

The statement was signed by the four members of the task force: Attorney-General Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail, Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Zeti Akhtar Aziz, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission chief commissioner Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed. – July 9, 2015.

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