

Special Branch told Putrajaya to explain 1MDB since 2013, ex deputy chief says

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By Muzliza Mustafa

Putrajaya thought it could explain issues surrounding its debt-ridden 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), but has failed to convince the people, former Special Branch deputy director Datuk Abdul Hamid Bador said today.

He said the police's intelligence unit had advised the government to provide clear answers about 1MDB's alleged scandals for the last two years, but had been told that Putrajaya knew how to handle the matter.

"We had foreseen it coming and we advised Putrajaya that the issue could be big," he said in a breakfast session with the media this morning.

"They thought that they could explain it, but unfortunately...," Hamid said.

1MDB was not a national threat, he added, but temperatures were rising.

"People want answers. It's a straight forward explanation, but if you say it's a tricky issue, then split it into several parts. Pick a right platform and explain," he said.

Hamid said the Special Branch had no power to decide on who would become prime minister and was only tasked with protecting the country.

"For the past 63 years it has gathered intelligence, dissected the information and reported it to the prime minister. We advise the prime minister on what is happening on the ground. The information is delivered to the policy makers and the top leadership in the form of suggestions, advice and reports," he said.

He urged the national leadership to "open their eyes and ears" and discard their "denial syndrome".

"The people are confused, stressed and angry over what has happened. 1MDB is confusing; come forward and explain. What is 1MDB? Where did the money go? Explain," Hamid said.

Instead, Putrajaya had people giving contradictory statements and incomplete answers.

Hamid also touched on moves that appeared to "change the goal posts" in the 1MDB probe, mentioning the Auditor-General and Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) now-suspended inquiry after a cabinet reshuffle which promoted four of its members into the cabinet.

"Don't say wait until the task force finishes, then keep changing the goal posts and delaying (the probe).

"Is it hard for the PAC, for the Auditor General to explain? If it is taking a long time, explain the parts which have been completed first," he said.

Putrajaya has been hard pressed to explain issues surrounding 1MDB, with criticism led by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and several opposition MPs, who have accused the government and the state investment firm of not answering transparently questions about its RM42 billion debts, overpriced purchases of power assets, and alleged involvement of businessman Low Taek Jho. – August 23, 2015

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