

Najib free to travel despite foreign probes into 1MDB

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By Eileen Ng

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has no problems travelling overseas, said Putrajaya, amid investigations by foreign enforcement agencies into troubled 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

Without naming them, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said certain parties were taking politically motivated actions aimed at tarnishing Najib and his administration.

"Lately, there are efforts to involve foreign agencies to investigate 1MDB's business transactions by certain parties.

"However, such efforts do not affect the prime minister's responsibilities, which require him to visit foreign countries.

"The efforts by these parties are actually driven by their own political interests aimed at ruining the prime minister's image and affect government's and foreign investors' confidence on country's stability," she said in a written reply to Ng Wei Aik (DAP-Tanjong).

Ng had asked if there is a travel risk against Najib since several foreign enforcement agencies are reportedly investigating 1MDB.

Najib is facing intense pressure following revelations that some RM2.6 billion was deposited into his personal accounts ahead of the 2013 elections, as well as various probes conducted into 1MDB.

Former Umno division leader Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan and his counsel Matthias Chang had lodged reports with enforcement agencies overseas on 1MDB over alleged financial wrongdoings.

The duo had lodged reports in France, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Singapore, between June 28 and August 26 this year.

The two were subsequently charged under Section 124L of the Penal Code with sabotaging the nation's banking and financial sectors.

Their case is being investigated as a security offence under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma).

Chang, who was political aide to former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, was arrested on October 8 at the Dang Wangi district police headquarters when he went to visit Khairuddin, who had been detained two weeks earlier under Sosma.

Both Khairuddin and Chang had slammed Putrajaya for accusing them of attempting to sabotage the economy, saying the charge was "stupid and frivolous in nature". – October 21, 2015.

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