

Zahid wants PAC members to take oath of secrecy
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By Eileen Ng

Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today proposed that members of Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) take an oath of secrecy to prevent the leakage of information related to its proceedings.

The deputy prime minister in mooted the suggestion said any statements or reports must originate officially from the bipartisan panel and not from the personal views of any of its members.

"I propose that the oath of secrecy be done by PAC members to maintain confidentiality and secrecy.

"The government feels it should be done to maintain PAC's confidentiality," he said at a press conference after the selection committee meeting today.

But, he said the suggestion needed to be referred to the legal adviser to ascertain if it could be implemented.

The move came after PAC member and staunch critic of troubled 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) Tony Pua had been accused of leaking confidential information related to the state investment vehicle to The Wall Street Journal, which recently reported that a US\$1.4 billion (RM6.02 billion) payment from 1MDB to a subsidiary of the International Petroleum Investment Co (IPIC), was missing.

IPIC is a state investment vehicle of the United Arab Emirates.

1MDB had refuted the report and warned the US-based newspaper that it had possibly breached Malaysian laws by referring to "transcript of the proceedings", which it said, could only be presented at PAC hearings on 1MDB.

Former PAC chairman Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed had denied PAC members were behind the alleged leaks, and had urged speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia to instead investigate Parliament staff.

Pandikar had distanced himself from such claims.

Zahid, however, said today he was not referring to any specific person when asked if it was a veiled reference to Pua.

"I am not mentioning any names of any members."

Zahid also said BN had nominated three names to fill up the vacancy in PAC, after its former members were appointed as ministers and deputy ministers during the late July Cabinet reshuffle.

However, he refused to name them, saying that he had passed the names to the speaker. – October 22, 2015.

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