

Saudi Source Confirmation over Donation Counters Allegation against Najib – Analyst Bernama

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PUTRAJAYA (Bernama) -- Confirmation that Saudi Arabia was the source of the fund deposited into the account of Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak is enough to counter the allegation against the Prime Minister, an analyst said Thursday.

Assoc Prof Mohd Izani Mohd Zain of the Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia, said the statement by a well-placed Saudi source verifying the source of the donation should stop the baseless allegation against Najib.

The Saudi source, who has asked not to be named, reportedly told the BBC the payment was authorised from the very top - from Saudi Arabia's late King Abdullah - with funds coming from both his personal finances and state funds.

The statement, among others, confirmed that the fund was deposited into Najib's account to help him win the 2013 general election because Saudi Arabia was concerned about the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Mohd Izani said that with the Saudi source confirming that the donation was made to Najib, then the Prime Minister had been telling the truth all along, that he had received the donation from the Middle East.

"It is no longer necessary to question it any more because evidently it was just a fund without any consideration ... there is no reason for any doubt. Some quarters deliberately want to tarnish the image of the Prime Minister by making baseless allegations," he told Bernama.

Mohd Izani said it was not strange for any political party to secure foreign funding.

"The donation of funds may be due to the good relations between Kuala Lumpur and Riyadh," he said.

On Najib's decision to return RM2.03 billion of the RM2.08 billion donation, Mohd Izani said that was up to the Prime Minister to do so.

"The Prime Minister can accept and also refuse to accept. He returned the money because he may have felt that it was not going to be utilised any more," he said.

The BBC, in a report on Wednesday, quoted a well-placed Saudi source as saying: "The purpose of the donation was simple, it was to help Mr Najib and his coalition win the election, employing a strategic communications team with international experience

focusing on the province of Sarawak, and funding social programmes through party campaigning."

On Tuesday, Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali cleared Najib of any criminal wrongdoing with regard to three investigations by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission into SRC International Sdn Bhd and the RM2.08 billion deposited into Najib's account and instructed that the files be closed.

Mohamed Apandi said the investigations had found that the fund amounted to RM2.08 billion, that it was a personal donation from the Saudi royal family in 2013 and that RM2.03 billion of the money was returned to the donour in the same year.

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