

Najib can no longer be silent on Jho Low, says Pakatan

Free Malaysia Today

July 13, 2017

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Batu MP Tian Chua says attorney-general should seek Interpol's aid to locate businessman for questioning.

PETALING JAYA: PKR's Tian Chua has asked the attorney-general to seek Interpol's assistance to locate and bring back Low Taek Jho, after Singapore prosecutors said 1MDB was a "victim" of the businessman.

Referring to the probes into irregular banking activity linked to 1MDB across the causeway, the Batu MP said the time has come for the government to address the question of whether it agrees or disagrees with the actions taken thus far.

"It is getting harder for the government to hide behind the veil of silence.

"Either the Malaysian government should say that it agrees with the Singaporean government that Low, popularly known as Jho Low, 'deliberately devised the whole scheme' to cheat Malaysians, or Prime Minister Najib Razak should admit that he is a victim of Low.

"If not, it may give the impression that he is part of the scheme," Tian Chua told FMT.

Prosecutors in Singapore have named Low as the central figure in probes linked to 1MDB, adding that he used money traceable to the state fund for his own benefit.

In court filings made public yesterday, the prosecutors said Low had received "huge" sums of money.

According to the filings, some US\$1 billion (RM4.3 billion) that 1MDB purportedly invested in a joint venture with PetroSaudi International Ltd was diverted to a bank account beneficially owned by Low.

"The main victim in this case is 1MDB," prosecutor Nathaniel Khng told a Singapore state court yesterday.

Jho Low has gone missing from the public eye.

Tian Chua said Attorney-General Mohamed Apandi Ali should immediately study the Singaporean court's findings.

“Our AG has to act on it. The logical thing is for the AG to bring back Jho Low for investigations or, since he is missing, alert Interpol to locate him for questioning,” he added.

The Batu MP said it was also time for Najib to rise above private interests and allow his stepson, Riza Aziz, to be questioned by the police.

“We know he (Riza) is in Malaysia. The AG would not need the help of Interpol to locate him,” he said.

Riza is a film producer and the co-founder and chairman of Red Granite Pictures, a Los Angeles-based film production company.

Meanwhile, DAP MP M Kulasegaran said the prime minister should clear the air on the matter in the Dewan Rakyat when Parliament convenes on July 24.

“Just like the Singaporean prime minister replied to the issues that took place among his siblings, Najib should do the same to clear the air,” he said.

Kulasegaran, who is Ipoh Barat MP, added that it would be better if the Dewan Rakyat calls for an emergency sitting on the matter.

“Najib should divulge the facts of the matter. A parliamentary committee should be formed to look into Jho Low and the transactions.”

He said Najib should respond on why Low had been involved in the 1MDB transactions and the kind of supervision carried out by the prime minister.

“So far, there are more questions than answers.

“It is long overdue for Najib and the others involved to give answers. He has to reply to make himself more accountable,” Kulasegaran said.

Singapore’s investigations into 1MDB-related activities have so far seen five people convicted, four of whom were jailed.

The probes are part of a worldwide effort to track how much of the US\$6 billion (RM25.8 billion) that 1MDB raised for development projects was used to pay for luxury real estate, art, lavish parties and more.

The US and Switzerland are among the countries also investigating the roles played by both banks and individuals.

Low has been characterised by US investigators as the controller of a plan to drain billions from the Malaysian fund.

Bloomberg reported that a request for comment sent via the website of Low's Jynwel Capital Ltd wasn't immediately answered, nor was an answer forthcoming from 1MDB to questions asked via email. The state-owned investment fund has consistently denied any wrongdoing.

Low previously described his role with the fund as informal consulting that didn't break any laws.

He issued a statement in June in response to a US Department of Justice lawsuit that sought to recover US\$540 million (RM2.3 billion) in assets that it said were purchased with funds misappropriated from 1MDB.

"We look forward to the court being presented with the actual facts which demonstrate that the DoJ's case is completely without foundation," he said through a representative at the time.

A probe by a Malaysian parliamentary committee identified irregularities in 1MDB's joint venture agreement with PetroSaudi in 2009, when US\$700 million (RM3 billion) was transferred to an account at RBS Coutts Bank Ltd held by a company that had nothing to do with the project.

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