

Nothing new, no evidence, Apandi dismisses latest DoJ suit
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A-G says US Justice Department has yet to provide any evidence of misappropriated funds from 1MDB.

PETALING JAYA: Attorney-General Mohamed Apandi Ali has dismissed the latest suit by US authorities over 1MDB, calling it a repeat of last year's case in which Washington sought to confiscate more than US\$1 billion in connection with the sovereign wealth fund.

In a statement today, he said neither Malaysian nor international authorities investigating 1MDB had furnished any evidence of misappropriated funds.

"1MDB... has been the subject of multiple investigations within Malaysia, including by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), auditor general and bi-partisan Public Accounts Committee (PAC). After review, we found that no crime was committed," he said, adding that the Royal Malaysia Police investigation was still ongoing.

The same goes for investigations carried out by the US Justice Department (DoJ), which had failed to provide any evidence that funds were misappropriated from 1MDB, he said.

Apandi added that no charges had been brought against Prime Minister Najib Razak, who until last year was the chairman of 1MDB's advisory board.

"We would like to express strong concerns at the insinuations that have been made against the prime minister of criminal wrongdoing.

"At no point in the civil claims is the prime minister named as a defendant or has been alleged to have committed any wrongdoing."

Najib, who has consistently denied any wrongdoing in connection with 1MDB, was cleared by Apandi on Jan 26, 2016.

Apandi said the DoJ had not asked the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC) for any information or evidence pertaining to the 1MDB case.

"However, we would welcome such a request in line with our commitment to international cooperation and the fight against money laundering," he added.

“As I have promised before, AGC will not hesitate to initiate proceedings against the perpetrators of criminal acts, provided there is sufficient evidence to do so. Any wrongdoing will be punished and Malaysia will always uphold the rule of law.”

His statement follows reports that the DoJ is seeking to recover US\$540 million (RM2.3 billion) in assets including art works, jewellery and film rights that it says were purchased with funds misappropriated from 1MDB.

This brings the total sought by the DoJ to US\$1.8 billion.

The items cited in the new suit as subject to seizure include a Park Avenue condominium, diamond jewellery, shares of fitness club operator Fly Wheel Sports Inc, a painting by Pablo Picasso titled “Nature Morte au Crane de Taureau” and rights to the 2014 film “Dumb and Dumber To”.

The government also wants to seize a luxury yacht, the Equanimity.

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