

Stolen money not 'civil matter', PKR MP tells IGP

Malaysia Today

June 16, 2017

By Robin Augustin

The foundation of the case is that money was stolen from 1MDB to purchase assets, says PKR's Wong Chen.

PETALING JAYA: PKR's Wong Chen says Inspector-General of Police Khalid Abu Bakar has made a "mistake" by viewing the United States Department of Justice's (DoJ) 1MDB investigations as a civil matter.

"The DoJ's seizure of assets is a civil action. But the foundation of the case is that money was stolen from 1MDB to purchase the assets," he told FMT.

"And stealing money is a crime."

Earlier today, Khalid said police would not interfere in the DoJ's latest move to recover some US\$540 million in assets which the US authorities claim was siphoned from 1MDB.

He also said police would not offer assistance to the US Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) to look into the case, which he termed as a "civil matter".

Wong said he welcomed the DoJ's continued pursuit of the case.

"We were worried that the issue may quiet down under the new (US President Donald) Trump administration," he said.

"But the latest move by the DoJ is a positive sign that even though the Malaysian government is not interested in pursuing the matter, other jurisdictions are still seeking the truth."

Last July, the DoJ, under the administration of then US president Barack Obama, filed civil lawsuits claiming that over US\$3.5 billion was misappropriated from 1MDB and used to fund extravagant spending by certain people and their associates connected with 1MDB.

In its lawsuits, filed in Los Angeles, DoJ said it sought to seize assets "involved in and traceable to an international conspiracy to launder money misappropriated from 1MDB".

The assets which the DoJ wants to seize include art works, jewellery and film rights that the DoJ says were purchased with funds misappropriated from 1MDB. The US government also wants to seize a luxury yacht, the Equanimity.

The latest move added to cases launched last year in which Washington sought to confiscate more than US\$1 billion allegedly embezzled by businessmen with political connections in Malaysia, bringing the total amount US officials said was stolen from 1MDB to US\$4.5 billion.

1MDB has consistently denied any wrongdoing.

Copyright (C) 2009-2016 MToday News Sdn. Bhd. All Rights Reserved.

Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/06/16/stolen-money-not-civil-matter-pkr-mp-tells-igp/>