

## **MACC seizes RM29m more in Sabah probe**

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**By Supriya Surendran**

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has seized an additional RM29 million in a “Sabah case”, according to its chief commissioner Tan Sri Dzul kifli Ahmad.

Dzul kifli did not mention in particular which case he was referring to during his keynote address at the 9th International Conference on Financial Crime and Terrorism Financing 2017 yesterday, but it is understood that his comments were in reference to the alleged embezzlement of funds from a ministry that was widely reported by the media.

News dailies reported on Wednesday that over RM150 million in cash was seized from 15 locations in Sabah in an anti-graft operation there.

“Just yesterday (Wednesday) we had frozen more than RM150 million in bank accounts in the recent Sabah case, and I am just (yesterday) told that another RM29 million has been frozen as of today (yesterday),” Dzul kifli said.

The reports stated that the MACC will be calling in people suspected of being involved in the case, including senior officials of the ministry who had allegedly siphoned off funds which were meant to improve public welfare and local infrastructure.

Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said his ministry will cooperate with the MACC in the probe into the alleged misappropriation of funds for programmes for the poor, according to a Bernama report.

“Although it is an old case, the files may still be with the ministry. So, if [the] MACC needs the files, we will hand them over. Whatever the MACC needs, we will provide,” he told reporters in Putrajaya yesterday.

Meanwhile, during his keynote address, Dzulkipli shared that by virtue of MACC’s cooperation with Bank Negara Malaysia and the compliance units of financial institutions, the MACC has managed to crack many high-profile and public-interest cases that involved predicated offences of corruption.

According to him, in 2015, RM3.937 million had been forfeited and RM4.95 million in 2016.

“This year, only up until September 2017, RM21.432 million had been successfully forfeited. This amount reflects a successful increase of almost 400% compared with the previous year,” he said.

Dzulkipli said the effects of corruption are far-reaching.

“If we do not play our part and work together [and stop] corruption from flourishing, then we are to be blamed for allowing it to exist in adverse effects to our financial system, businesses as well as our commerce activities.

“If we are to have genuine and lasting success in our fight against corruption, we must work towards spreading the message that there is no tolerance when it comes to corruption. There must be strict compliance ethics, and strong commitment and willingness by the financial community to confront and disrupt corruption wherever it arises,” he said.

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