

Najib should know the movement of GST refund money, says PM

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27/08/2018

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 27 (Bernama) -- Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who was also the finance minister, should have been aware of the movement of the money in the Consolidated Fund meant for the Goods and Services Tax (GST) refunds, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Yes ... he (Najib) should have known where the money is. Money belonging to the government can't be spent just like that ... (there is a) need to fill in forms, have to get permission and there has to be a written record of all movement of money.

"If he says he does not know ... there must be something wrong. The government will trace the culprit and is ready to take any legal action," he said at a media conference after opening the 'Cities 4.0: Building a Smart & Digitalised City' International Conference and Exhibition here today.

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng had said in a statement yesterday that it was hard to believe that Najib was not aware that as of May 31, 2018, up to 121,429 companies and individuals had yet to get back their GST refunds, with some of the refunds dating back to 2015.

Lim had also pointed out that only Najib had the authority to stop the transfer of the RM19.25 billion into the Consolidated Fund for the GST refunds from the RM82.9 billion requested by the Customs Department. Najib has denied any wrongdoing.

Dr Mahathir also spoke of the 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M), which he had labelled as a form of corruption, and said the aid was given to garner the people's support.

The Prime Minister said he believed that the aid had not been distributed equally and to the groups accordingly.

"The government cares and wants to help the people but the aid needs to be right. If a person earns less than RM4,000 and has lots of burden, including a large family liability, we can give him money.

"But giving money to someone just for earning less than RM4,000, regardless of the situation, is wrong. It is a bribe. Government policy is to help the needy, not everyone," he said.

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