

1. Final 1MDB audit report to be tabled this month: PAC

KUALA LUMPUR: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) said today that the National Audit Department (NAD) would be tabling the final audit report on 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) this month.

Its chairman Datuk Hasan Arifin in saying this, also criticised a news portal report today which alleged that the NAD had failed to keep to the date of tabling the final audit report scheduled for this month.

"This baseless and irresponsible news report is clearly intended to tarnish the reputation and credibility of the PAC and NAD which are committed to conducting a transparent and accountable auditing on 1MDB in the interest of the public.

"The PAC would like to stress that the NAD would definitely be tabling the final audit report on 1MDB this February," he said in a statement, here.

Hasan also wants all parties to have confidence and trust in the PAC which comprised various representatives, including from the opposition.

"There is nothing that should be protected and the PAC report is based on accurate and truthful information," he said.

On another matter, Hasan said the PAC regretted that Switzerland's attorney-general had issued a media statement on the 1MDB issue without first communicating directly with the Malaysian government.

He said Swiss attorney-general Michael Lauber's action could lead to speculation that is based on inaccurate facts.--BERNAMA

2. Lembaga tabung Haji can pay 2015 dividend, says auditor-general

KUALA LUMPUR: Lembaga Tabung Haji (LTH) is able to pay dividends to its depositors based on the review of its income statement for the year ending Dec 31, 2015.

A statement by the auditor-general Tan Sri Ambrin Buang said deciding the 2015 dividend rate was the responsibility of the LTH board of directors.

The statement was in response to media reports on LTH's ability to pay the dividend to depositors and linked to the review being undertaken by the auditor-general.

The auditor-general said the review of LTH before the fund announced its dividend is common practice to ensure that the accounting policy used by it is consistent and conforms to the concept of prudence. -- Bernama

NEW STRAITS TIMES Thursday, 11 February, 2016

3. Illegal sand mining operations in Putrajaya raided

PUTRAJAYA: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and Putrajaya Land and Mines Office today conducted an integrated operation to raid illegal sand mining operations here.

The raids were conducted following tip-offs from the public on several illegal sand mining activities near the Putrajaya International Convention Centre, said MACC in a statement.

It is understood that the mining operators had allegedly bribed the authorities to cover up their activities.

In the operations, two individuals aged between 30 and 50 years-old had attempted to bribe the MACC officers with RM2,500 to avoid from enforcement action being taken against them.

They were arrested by MACC and are being investigated under section 17 (b) of MACC Act 2009 for giving bribes to civil servants.

The Land and Mines Office also seized four excavators which were used to dig sand on the 21ha land.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the illegal activities had been operating since 2013 and were protected by gangsters who were paid to threaten enforcement officers.

NEW STRAITS TIMES Tuesday, 16 February, 2016

4. Mohd Bakke never said RM2.6bil came from 1MDB: PAC

KUALA LUMPUR: Public Accounts Committee Chairman Datuk Hasan Arifin today confirmed that former 1Malaysia Development Bhd Chairman Tan Sri Mohd Bakke Salleh had never said that money from 1MDB had been transferred to the personal account of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

He said this was consistent with the repeated public confirmation of the matter by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission and the Attorney General's Chambers.

"As chairman of the PAC, I noted with regret the misinformation published by the social media and websites with regard to false claims made in relation to what was said by Mohd Bakke at the hearing before the PAC on Feb 11," he said in a statement.

He said the PAC was a bipartisan parliamentary committee comprising experienced MPs from the government and opposition sides, and it was investigating the 1MDB matter in a professional and transparent manner based on documentary evidence, interviews of witnesses and the outcome of audit by the National Audit Department.

He said the PAC conclusion would be a public record.

"Therefore, we call on all quarters to cease unnecessary speculation and wait for the official PAC report that will be presented to Parliament in March 2016," he said.

Yesterday, Mohd Bakke, in reference to rumours on social media, dismissed an allegation he had said that a RM2.6 billion fund had come from 1MDB. -BERNAMA

NEW STRAITS TIMES Wednesday, 17 February, 2016

5. 109,605 poor registered under E-kasih system in Sarawak

KUCHING: Some 109,605 poor people in Sarawak have registered under the E-kasih system as of this month and the figure is expected to increase, said state Welfare, Women and Family Development Datuk Fatimah Abdullah.

She said there are about 29,586 households categorised as hard core poor, 35,209 poor, 6, 855 people are those categorised as at risk to become poor has registered under the system.

"Currently, 37,954 households have been removed from the list of below the poverty line as their income has improved, while some have died.

"However, a total of 958 people out of the total registered under the programme have yet to receive any kind of assistance from the welfare department," Fatimah said after chairing a meeting on the state-level Poverty Eradication Focus Committee here yesterday.

Fatimah said the department would receive at least five households registering at 40 welfare district offices throughout Sarawak, a day.

She said the number will increase as there are some poor people have yet to register.

She said the ministry has requested for an allocation of RM50 million from the federal government to provide more assistance to 5,000 people under the 1AZAM programme.

"Those who have yet to receive any assistance or register under the programme, please register as soon as possible as we need to know that there are no poor households being left out to receive the assistance from the ministry.

"Each household must have at least one aid such as education or housing aid from us. We want to help these people to improve their quality of living and ease their burden as the economy is not stable at the moment," she said.

A Mobile Team assistance programme was also introduced last month, to ensure the supply of assistance could be reach out to those who are living in the rural areas. Currently, there are about 32 new areas proposed for the mobile team programme for this year.

Fatimah is optimistic with the implementation of the various poverty eradication programmes, more people would be taken out of the poverty data.

NEW STRAITS TIMES Friday, 19 February, 2016

6. 1MDB refutes WSJ's claims on channeling funds into PM's accounts

KUALA LUMPUR: 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) has refuted claims that it had deposited funds into the personal accounts of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Responding to allegations made by the Wall Street Journal, the company, in a statement today, the company said this has already been reiterated by numerous authorities.

"Contrary to the Wall Street Journal's baseless and unproven allegations, 1MDB had consistently maintained that it has not paid any funds to the personal accounts of the Prime Minister.

"This has been reiterated by multiple lawful authorities including the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), the Malaysian Attorney-General, and various reputable international publications, who have confirmed that these funds came from Saudi Arabia," said the company.

1MDB also took the Wall Street Journal to task over its claim that its reporting on the subject had never been called into question.

"To therefore suggest, as the Wall Street Journal has, that their reporting on this matter has never been called into question is not only disingenuous but an outright lie."

NEW STRAITS TIMES Sunday, 28 February, 2016

7. RM1.5b integrated ICT system planned to further improve health services

The Health Ministry plans to develop an integrated information communication technology (ICT) system to further improve the quality of health services in the country. Its minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said the system, estimated to cost RM1.5 billion, would be developed in stages and the project was expected to start before the 14th General Election. "I will bring up this matter to the prime minister (Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak) soon as the proposal came up a long time ago, but the development has been slow," he said after officiating at the implementation of the Pharmacy Information System (PhIS) at Sultanah Fatimah Specialist Hospital, here, today. Dr Subramaniam said the system's

development process was not easy and would take three to five years. With the system, all the existing or new systems involving matters such as registration and patient records will be integrated in one system that can be accessed by any hospital or medical centre. It will be convenient for patients as they need not bring along their old medical records to a new place if their cases are transferred or referred to another hospital. Dr Subramaniam said in the initial phase, the system would only involve government hospitals but in future, to be extended to the private hospitals. On the launching of the PhIS today, he said the system was developed with 12 main modules to monitor the management of medicines at the hospital covering procurement, optimising use of resources, improving quality of services, and safety of medicines. "Through the system, the transaction data including the prescription process, dispensing of medicines and others are gathered in the data 'warehouse' to allow for analysis in order to improve the services overall," he added. On another development, Dr Subramaniam said to reduce the waiting time for the use of the operation theatres at Sultanah Fatimah Specialist Hospital, he would request for approval from the Finance Ministry for two more operation theatres, estimated to cost between RM4 million and RM5 million.