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Uproar over minister's Tabung Haji mess remark

A MINISTER'S use of the Malay word for faeces to describe the financial mess Tabung Haji is in sparked immediate outcry among the opposition in the august House.

Datuk Seri Dr Muzahid Yusof Rawa accused the previous government of "*buat tahi* (making a mess)" in handling the finances of the pilgrims fund.

The Minister in the Prime Minister's Department said the government was in the midst of restructuring and restoring Tabung Haji's balance sheet after it was left with a deficit of RM4.1bil by the previous government.

"They (the opposition) should know what we are doing, but instead they throw a lot of accusations as if we are trying to sell Tabung Haji, and (saying that) Tabung Haji is now under DAP and others, when in reality we are taking steps and are trying to rescue it from the previous people who *buat tahi*," he said during Question Time.

Datuk Seri Azeez Abdul Rahim (BN-Baling), Datuk Seri Tajuddin Abdul Rahman (BN-Pasir Salak), and Awang Hashim (PAS-Pendang) called on Muzahid to retract his remarks.



In the limelight: Tabung Haji has been rocked by revelations following the release of a report in Parliament detailing its financial issues.

Datuk Ahmad Nazlan Idris (BN-Jerantut) said: "Speaker, how can a minister who wears a songkok say the word *tahi*?"

Speaker Datuk Mohamad Ariff Md Yusof then asked Muzahid to

retract his remarks.

Muzahid did so, saying, "I retract that the previous leadership *buat tahi*, the previous leadership actually created disturbances (*onar*)."

To a supplementary question

from Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed (PH-Jeli), who asked whether the government was prepared to hold separate talks for opposition and government lawmakers on the latest development in the matter, Muzahid said it was a good suggestion.

He said the government had made it a top priority to "rescue" Tabung Haji.

It was reported that a Special Purpose Vehicle under the Finance Ministry would take over an estimated RM19.9bil worth of Tabung Haji's underperforming assets.

The fund has been rocked by revelations after the release of a report by Muzahid in Parliament highlighting illegal dividend distributions since 2014, assets shrinkage of RM4.1bil and claims of accounting irregularities to show a higher profit.

Tabung Haji's reported liabilities of RM74.4bil against total assets of RM70.3bil resulted in a total deficit of RM4.1bil as at Dec 31, 2017.

Watch the video
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