

New Straits Times November 2017

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1. MACC concludes probe of Razak Baginda's involvement in Scorpene sub purchase



The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has concluded its probe into the involvement of political analyst Abdul Razak Baginda in the purchase of Scorpene submarines in 2002, the Prime Minister's Department revealed on Wednesday

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has concluded its probe into the involvement of political analyst Abdul Razak Baginda in the purchase of Scorpene submarines in 2002, the Prime Minister's Department revealed on Wednesday.

Its minister Datuk Paul Low said the Commission had carried out the probe under the MACC Act 2009.

"The investigation has been completed. However, the MACC has yet to receive any application from any (foreign) party appealing (for information) on Razak's case," he told the Dewan Rakyat today.

He said this in response to a question from Teresa Kok (DAP-Seputeh) on MACC's probe of the case, and whether the government would work with the French government, which had allegedly charged Razak with corruption in relation to the submarine purchase, to extradite him.

On Aug 2, in response to media reports, Razak denied that he had been charged in France or that he had committed any crime of corruption, or breached laws with regard to the purchase.

He acknowledged that a formal investigation had been launched and said that he welcomed the French inquiry. He stressed that the investigation is ongoing and that no formal charges have yet been brought against any individual in a court of law.

2. Health Ministry gets 7,000 complaints, spends RM20mil on compensation annually



Deputy Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya (second from right) mingles with trainee nurses at the Malaysia Ministry of Health Training Institute. NSTP

SUNGAI PETANI: The Health Ministry receives an average of 7,000 complaints annually covering various aspects including services and facilities.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya said among the complaints received from the public were poor services or communication skills among the doctors and nurses, long waiting time before receiving treatment, and insufficient equipment.

Besides the complaints, he said the ministry was also forced to spend about RM20 million annually as compensation due to negligence.

In the ministry's bid to overcome the problem and deliver top notch services to the people, Dr Hilmi said numerous initiatives have been taken including providing community simulation lab at nursing colleges.

"With the simulation programme, the nursing students could enhance their soft skills which will enable them to deal with patients and public more efficiently even while under pressure or stressful situation.

"Apart from that, the students are also given the exposure to the community services through the Ziarah Kasih programme where they will go to the ground and provide medical assistance to those in need at the villages.

"It is hoped that the initiatives would help to boost the services provided as we do not want the people to pay the consequences due to our mistakes," he said in press conference at the Malaysia Ministry of Health Training Institute on Saturday.

He later launched the community simulation lab at the institute.

On another note, Dr Hilmi lauded the lecturers at nursing colleges and institute for producing skilful nurses who are recognised at the international level.

He also took the opportunity to encourage the students to further their studies in their respective fields after graduating from their diploma courses in order to increase their knowledge and skills, which would make them more marketable.

3. MACC nationwide crackdown on corrupt MMEA men; 5 remanded in Sabah and Sarawak

KOTA KINABALU: Five Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) officers based in Sarawak and here were remanded today for allegedly accepting bribes from foreign fishermen.

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) obtained remand orders from the magistrate's courts here and in Petrajaya, Sarawak against the five.

It is learnt that they were among 10 MMEA men arrested by MACC from several locations in Sabah, Sarawak, Pahang and Terengganu yesterday.

Those remanded here were logistics deputy director, 45; investigation officer, 53; and an Able Rate personnel, 39.

Magistrate Afiq Agoes granted six days' remand on the deputy director, and five days' each on the two others.

MACC prosecuting officer Mohd Faliq Basiruddin said the trio were detained for suspected involvement in a racket to allow foreign fishing vessels to enter Sabah waters.

"They will be investigated under Section 17 (A) of the MACC Act for soliciting/receiving gratification," he said.

In Sarawak, two of MMEA enforcement officers were each remanded for a week to facilitate probe into allowing an influx of foreign fishermen into Sarawak waters.

MACC obtained the remand on the duo, in their 50s, when they were produced before magistrate Zaiton Anuar this morning.

The duo was arrested during an operation to root out those who were in cahoots with syndicates related to the influx of foreign fishermen.

Both of them were remanded under Section 17(a) of the MACC Act 2009, which carries a maximum 20 years' jail and RM10,000 fine or five times the value of the bribe, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

Five other people, all civilians, arrested in Bintulu and Miri in connection with the case are also expected to be remanded today.

According to MACC strategic communication unit, the commission's director-general Tan Sri Dzulkifli Ahmad and MMEA director-general Datuk Seri Zulkifli Abu Bakar are scheduled to hold a joint press conference at the MACC headquarters in Putrajaya at noon today.

4. Police waiting for AG's Chambers' instruction on 1MDB: Home Ministry



The police are waiting for instructions from the Attorney General's Chambers on the next course of action to take with regards to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) case.

KUALA LUMPUR: The police are waiting for instructions from the Attorney General's Chambers on the next course of action to take with regards to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) case.

The Home Ministry, in a written reply at the Dewan Rakyat, said police have submitted the investigation papers on 1MDB to the AG's Chambers, after Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali requested them to reopen the case.

"The police have executed investigations as instructed by the AG's Chambers and referred them back. Up until now, they are still waiting for further advice and instruction," the ministry said.

Tony Pua (DAP- Petaling Jaya Utara) had asked on the progress of investigation on former 1MDB chief executive officer Datuk Shahrol Halmi and other related management executives allegedly involved in the scandal.

Apandi on Oct 31, confirmed he had instructed the police to further investigate 1MDB.

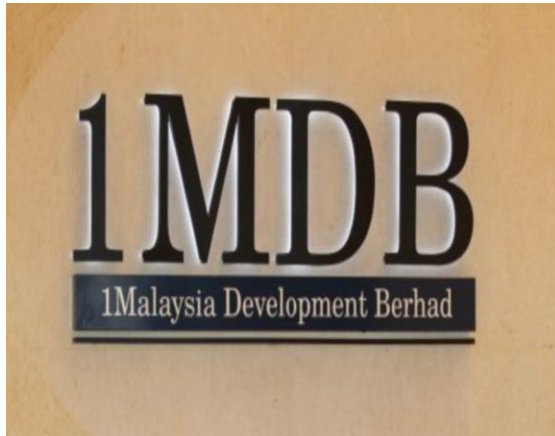
He said the instruction was issued, as 25 per cent to 30 per cent of the investigation paper (IP) submitted to the AG Chambers had to be reviewed.

He said there was a lack of evidence and thus wanted to pursue that area further.

On Sept 20, Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun was reported saying the police had concluded their investigations into 1MDB and there was no need to investigate the case further.

However, he had said the police would act if there were new instructions issued by the Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) or the federal cabinet.

5. MACC did not investigate 1MDB because other relevant bodies were doing it



Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) did not carry out investigation in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) matter as relevant authorities were probing the case.

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) did not carry out investigation in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) matter as relevant authorities were probing the case.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Paul Low Seng Kuan said in a written reply on Nov 1 that the investigation had been done by Bank Negara and related officials.

"The case has been under investigation by authorities such as Bank Negara, the police and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC)," said Low to member of parliament Tony Pua's (Petaling Jaya Utara-DAP) question on why the MACC had not investigated the embezzlement and abuse of power involving state-owned fund case as announced in June.

However, MACC had probed SRC International and the donation RM2.6 billion donation received by the Prime Minister while 1MDB and other organisations has been fined a total of RM115.8 million for non-compliance with the Financial Services Act by Bank Negara.

PAC tabled a 106-page 1MDB governance management control report to the Dewan Rakyat with its committee consisting of Barisan Nasional and opposition members of Parliament in April last year.

The police probed the state-owned fund under section 409 of Penal Code for criminal breach of trust and section 420 on cheating.

6. RM2.2b for power supply in Sabah in 2015-2020



Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili said the amount was channelled as grants to 57 projects involving power generation, delivery, distribution, post black-out and hydro electric studies.

KUALA LUMPUR: The government has allocated RM2.2billion to improve electricity supply in Sabah from 2015 to 2020, the Dewan Rakyat was told today.

Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Johnity Ongkili said the amount was channelled as grants to 57 projects involving power generation, delivery, distribution, post black-out and hydro electric studies.

"These include the construction of 300MW gas power plant in Sandakan and 275kV transmission lines from Kalumpang to Sipitang (390km).

"Currently, there are 41 on-going projects worth RM1.41 billion with five projects completed this year," he said in reply to Datuk Raime Unggi (BN-Tenom) during the minister's question and answer session.

Raime had asked the government to state the short and long-term actions to strengthen electricity supply in Sabah and reduce power disruption

Maximus said Sabah Electricity Supply Task Force was also set up to carry out power supply projects in the state.

He said the initiatives would improve the quality of electricity supply to consumers in the state.

He said the efforts reduced the System Average Interruption Duration Index from 2,868 minutes per user in 2009 to 311 minutes per person last year.

7. Probe Selangor government land deal, NGOs urge MACC



Generation2U United Club adviser Kalam Azad Abu Bakar (center) said there were several matters in the land transaction that raised suspicions of corruption.

PUTRAJAYA: Generation2U United Club and Kampung Lindungan 565 Youth Association have urged Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to investigate the Selangor government over a land deal in Ijok.

Generation2U United Club adviser Kalam Azad Abu Bakar said there were several matters in the land transaction that raised suspicions of corruption.

He said the land belonged to two housing developers, Mujur Zaman Sdn Bhd and LBCN Development Sdn Bhd, but in 2009 the Selangor government, led by then menteri besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, acquired the 889ha land and revoked their contract for failing to develop the land on time.

"Both developers then sued the Selangor government for alleged wrongful conduct in forfeiting and acquiring their land, but then the case was thrown out. In 2013, the case was brought to the Court of Appeal and it was struck out. A year later, the matter was taken to the Federal Court.

"However, after Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali became the menteri besar, the Selangor government suddenly agreed to withdraw the case and return the land to LBCN Development and Mujur Zaman.

"The question is, why did the state government suddenly give the land back to the developers when it had the advantage in the case and would possibly have won?"

Kalam was speaking to reporters after after lodging a report with MACC together with Kampung Lindungan 565 Youth Association representative Mohd Ismawi Ismail.

In September 2015, Eco World Development Group Bhd bought part of the land from LBCN Development and Mujur Zaman.

Kalam questioned how Eco World Development was able to purchase the land when it was still the subject of dispute and litigation in court between the developers and Selangor government.

He said the land settlers have also yet to receive the compensation.

"As non-governmental organisations, we urge MACC to probe this case and take all necessary actions. We hope there is an end to this case and the settlers will receive their compensation," he said.

8. 100 arrests expected to be made in Johor by year-end - MACC



Johor MACC director Datuk Azmi Alias said this number of arrests was based on the support given by the Johor government which continues to facilitate in efforts to combat corruption.

ISKANDAR PUTERI: The Johor Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) is expected to make about 100 arrests related to graft by the end of this year.

Johor MACC director Datuk Azmi Alias said this number of arrests was based on the support given by the Johor government which continues to facilitate in efforts to combat corruption.

"The Johor leadership has greatly helped me in the efforts to combat corruption and up until the end of this year, I expect that the state MACC would have made about 100 arrests. But do these arrests mean that corruption has been fully eradicated?

"I think not. There could people who replace each of these 100 people by committing the same thing because corruption is very much related to opportunity and gaps," Azmi said during the National Transformation 2050 (TN50) dialogue session at the Pinewood Iskandar Malaysia Studios here today.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa and Johor State Secretary Datuk Azmi Rohani were speakers at the dialogue which was attended by more than 2,700 state civil servants.

Azmi said people who occupied certain positions have higher chances of having brushes with corruption, and this was among the issues that should be addressed.

"When we assume such positions, the chances of us committing corruption is very high. That is why my aspiration for TN50 is for corruption to become the country's number one enemy.

"In the past, the government declared that drugs were the country's number one enemy. But today, everyone has regarded corruption as the (number one) enemy instead because it is the mother of most crimes in our country," he said.

At the same time, Azmi said that an increase in the number of people in prisons and increase in a number of court cases could become stumbling blocks for Malaysia to become successful.

"We need to look at certain indicators such as the number of people in prisons and detention centres for illegal immigrants.

"If there are still many of our citizens and foreigners in these places and if there is an increase of court cases, then we will not achieve our dream of becoming a developed country."

9. Sarawak govt to rebuild 110 dilapidated schools

PETRA JAYA: Sarawak has identified 110 critically-dilapidated schools to be rebuilt with the allocation from the Federal 2018 Budget to Sarawak amounting RM1 billion.

State Education, Science and Technological Research Minister Datuk Seri Michael Manyin Jawong said although 415 schools needed repairs, the 110 would be given priority.

He said the remaining schools were expected to be rebuilt with the allocation under the 11th Malaysia Plan.

To a question from See Chee How (PKR-Batu Lintang) at the state assembly sitting here recently, Manyin said the ministry was also in the process of merging under-enrolled schools.

"We will consolidate schools with fewer than 150 pupils in rural areas. We hope to gather students (from small schools) and move them to a bigger school with better facilities. This provides a more conducive and competitive environment," he added.

However, he said, the ministry was unable to confirm when the merger could be completed as it depended on the response of the schoolchildren's parents.



State Education, Science and Technological Research Minister Datuk Seri Michael Manyin Jawong said although 415 schools needed repairs, the 110 would be given priority.

"We can only encourage, but we can't force them. We hope elected representatives can assist the government to convince the (schoolchildren's) parents," he said.

Meanwhile, Datuk Tiong Thai King (Barisan Nasional-Dudong) raised a question on illegal logging in the state.

In reply, state Urban Planning, Land Administration and Environment Assistant Minister Datuk Len Talif Salleh said Sarawak continued to intensify its efforts to stop illegal logging.

In the first 10 months of the year, he said, 528 operations were conducted and resulted in the seizure of 10,783 logs, with royalties amounting RM676,345.

"Of 17 cases brought to court, 10 have been disposed of."

Initiatives were carried out with other enforcement agencies, including inspections at main routes and rivers that were used to transport logs

On top of that, 48 one-stop compliance centres were set up to monitor the logging activities.

"We have intensified our efforts by conducting frequent air surveillance by using advanced technologies, such as unmanned aerial vehicles, hyperspectral and compact airborne tactical system," he said.

10. 1MDB's purchase of 3 power producers resulted in savings of RM1.6 billion: Maximus Ongkili



Energy, Green Technology and Water (KeTHHA) Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili says the purchase of three independent power producers (IPPs) by 1Malaysian Development Berhad (1MDB) has helped saved RM1.6 billion for the country

KOTA KINABALU: The purchase of three independent power producers (IPPs) by 1Malaysian Development Berhad (1MDB) has helped saved RM1.6 billion for the country, said Energy, Green Technology and Water (KeTHHA) Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili.

He was responding to DAP's Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua's allegations during a recent parliament sitting that the purchase of the three entities had not benefited the people in terms of electricity tariff.

During the Dewan Rakyat, Ongkili had said that as part of 1MDB's acquisition of Tanjong Energy Holdings Sdn Bhd, Kuala Langat Power Plant and Jimah Power in 2012, the tariff rate had been maintained as finalised in the power purchase agreements (PPA).

Ongkili, who is also Parti Bersatu Sabah acting president, was speaking during the party's luncheon with media here.

He also added the lower capacity rate financial (CRF) of RM6kw per month for 48 months has resulted in RM1.6 billion in savings as per the condition in the tender set by the Energy Commission.

"Five years ago, before I become the KeTHHA minister, there had been discussions by the government to reduce the tariff.

"The tariff cannot be increased as they are tied to the 21-year PPA," he said, adding the tariff can only be reviewed downward.

11. PAC: Blacklist negligent contractor and consultant



Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman Datuk Seri Hasan Arifin says the Works Ministry should blacklist the contractor and consultant involved in the Sultanah Nora Ismail Hospital due negligence and delays.

KUALA LUMPUR: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has asked the Works Ministry to blacklist the contractor and consultant involved in the Sultanah Nora Ismail Hospital upgrading project due negligence and delays.

PAC chairman Datuk Hasan Arifin cited several weaknesses in the management of the project, including a delay of 90 days in completing the project, the appointment of an inexperienced contractor which affected the quality of construction, and the high cost of transport services.

He said the committee had suggested that the Finance Ministry review the appointments and payments made to the consultant of the project to maintain a system of checks and balances.

"Contractors and consultants undertaking government projects, especially health facilities, need to be chosen based on their financial and technical capabilities.

"The PAC asks that the Works Ministry comes up with a report for the professional board on negligence by the contractor and the consultant," he said, adding that the poor quality of work had affected the delivery of health services.

According to the 2014 Auditor-General's Report, the upgrading of the hospital was not done in accordance with the contract's specifications.

The PAC also raised other issues such as the issuance of the certificate of completion a year earlier, delay due to negligence, indirect losses, and the role of the Public Works Department (JKR) in monitoring the consultant and contractor.

"Based on the proceedings of the meeting, the PAC concluded that although the project was carried out through direct negotiation, JKR should have from the beginning examined the weaknesses found in several design components of the project, which were found to be unsuitable and not up to hospital's standards," he added.

12. Probe into FIC's hotel deal in Kuching almost done, says MACC



Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner Tan Sri Dzulkifli Ahmad said the commission is expected to complete the investigation into the purchase of a luxury hotel in Kuching by Felda Investment Corporation (FIC) soon.

KOTA SAMARAHAN: Investigation into the purchase of a luxury hotel in Kuching by Felda Investment Corporation (FIC) is at the final stage, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said today.

Its chief commissioner Tan Sri Dzulkifli Ahmad said the commission is expected to complete the investigation soon.

He, however, did not provide details on the specific timeframe for the completion of the probe.

"It (case) is in the final stage now and (hopefully) will be completed soon," he said.

It was reported FIC's 2014 purchase on the hotel, which could accommodate 213 guest rooms and apartment suites, had raised suspicions of corruption and abuse of power.

It was alleged that FIC paid between RM40 million and RM50 million more than the actual market value of the hotel.

Three teams from MACC headquarters, accompanied by their Sarawak counterpart, visited the offices of three companies and the hotel as part of the investigation into the case in July this year.

The three companies, which include a developer and property agent, were believed to have been involved in the purchase of the hotel, allegedly bought by FIC at an inflated price about two years ago.

On the purchase of another hotel in Kensington, London by FIC, Dzulkifli said the case would require more time as it involved another country.

"We are applying through our AG (Attorney-General) for a mutual assistance with the United Kingdom.

"We are still communicating with them,"

"The case can only be completed once we are given mutual assistance from our counterparts in the UK." he said.

The four-star Park City Hotel in Kensington, comprising 62 guest rooms and two three-bedroom serviced apartments, was reportedly overpaid by at least £20 million (RM110 million).

It was reported that FIC had bought the hotel for £98 million (RM543 million) in 2014.

Dzulkifli was speaking to the reporters after an anti-graft gathering at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) today.

Earlier, more than 1,000 university students gathered at the university's Arena Gemilang, DeTAR Putera to show their support for efforts to curb corruption in the country.

"The young generation today will be leading the country in the future, thus, they have an important role to help Malaysia become a corruption-free nation," he said.

"This year, we are targeting university students and equip them with effective thinking skills on how to handle and fight against corruption.

"We need to educate them on the consequences of abuse of power, receiving and offering of bribes and how these unhealthy practices can destroy a nation." he added.

MACC, he said, plans to focus its awareness programmes on younger students next year, such as those in the primary and secondary schools.

13. New Pan Borneo Highway link to connect 700,000 people in KK



Najib being briefed by Fadilah on the Pan Borneo Highway Package 6 in Putatan as Musa and Shahelmei look on.



Najib being greeted by people who turned up for the launch of the Pan Borneo Highway Package 6 in Putatan IZHARI

KOTA KINABALU: The sixth Pan Borneo Highway Sabah package will bring better connectivity to 700,000 residents here, reducing traffic congestion at rapidly progressing areas.

Launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, the RM900 million Package 6 dubbed the "Kota Kinabalu Outer Ring Road" will stretch from Putatan to Inanam, passing through the city.

"I was told Putatan and Inanam are progressing rapidly and congested. So, once this is completed in three years, it will help solve problems as the state continues to developed.

"This is what we called national transformation. When we want the nation to progress, we need to focus on people-centric infrastructure development like connectivity.

"This is to ensure smooth and safe movement of people and goods with no traffic congestion," he told a large crowd at the launching of Sixth Pan Borneo Sabah Package at the Putatan district council near here.

Present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Musa Aman, deputy chief minister Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan, Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof and Borneo Highway Project Delivery Partner Sdn Bhd (BHP) chief executive officer and managing director Shahelmy Yahya among others.

Describing himself as a Prime Minister for all, Najib said he had made sure to implement inclusive development concept so no states are left behind.

"We are not only a government that has vision towards the country and states but a political will to turn a vision into reality.

"Part of the visions is to ensure Sabah continues to develop because Sabah people have the right to enjoy a more meaningful development," he said to resounding cheers from the floor.

Najib stressed it was his responsibility as the country's top leader to step up and close any development gap between the peninsula, Sabah and Sarawak so everyone could enjoy a balance progress together.

"We can do projects but if we simply implement just for the sake of making projects, then there will be no significant transformation to Sabah.

"In many projects implemented, there is no bigger impact than the Pan Borneo Highway and I want allocations to reach the grassroots," he added.

He also noted on the strong cooperation between Federal and Sabah government, adding a faster development growth can be achieved when both parties share similar vision.

The Package 6 project, featuring a 19.1km stretch, will see upgrading work from single carriageway to dual carriageway on new alignment and bypass.

It also involves the construction of three new bridges (Sungai Moyog Bridge 1, 2, and 3), two overhead pedestrian bridges, 10 U-turn junctions and four bus stops.

The federal and state government have appointed BHP as the Project Delivery Partner to design, implement, supervise and manage the development and upgrading of the Pan Borneo Highway Sabah project, within the agreed schedule and costs.

In his speech, Musa said the Putatan stretch, being the main road to city center, was always congested and the government had in 2013 implemented project to upgrade and expand Putatan stretch to Petagas for smooth traffic.

"However, the people are still facing traffic congestion due to development in surrounding areas. The solution to this problem is Pan Borneo Highway as it guarantees effective, safe, and comfortable land connectivity system," he said.

He stressed Najib has proven himself to be a realistic leader, who works towards keeping his promises since the first launching of Pan Borneo Highway project until its implementation.

14. 'Halal' is not just about food - HDC



Halal Industry Development Corporation chief executive officer Datuk Seri Jamil Bidin.

HALAL STANDARDS IN MALAYSIA

	Malaysia standards	Description
1	MS 2594:2015	Halal chemicals for use in potable water treatment
2	MS 2610:2015	Muslim friendly hospitality services — Requirements
3	MS 2565:2014	Halal Packaging
4	MS 1500:2009	Halal Food (Production, preparation, handling and storage)
5	MS 2200:2008	Islamic Consumer Goods (Part 1: Cosmetics and personal care)
6	MS 2200-2: 2012	Islamic Consumer Goods (Part 2: Usage of animal bone, skin and fur)
7	MS 1900:2005	Syariah-based quality management systems
8	MS 2300:2009	Value-based management systems (Islamic perspective requirements)
9	MS 2424:2012	Halal Pharmaceuticals
10	MS 2400-1:2010	Halalan-Toyyiban Assurance Pipeline- Part 1 (Management system requirements for transportation of goods and/or cargo chain services)
11	MS 2400 -2:2010	Halalan-Toyyiban Assurance Pipeline- Part 2 (Management system requirements for warehousing and related activities)
12	MS 2400 -3:2010	Halalan-Toyyiban Assurance Pipeline- Part 3 (Management system requirements for retailing)
13	MS 2424:2012	Halal pharmaceuticals

INFOGRAPHIC NST

THERE is more to the halal industry than what meets the eye despite the religious code it represents.

The stamp of approval has helped guide Muslims in making the right choices in their daily lives and benefits others, who are in no particular order, compelled to adhere to the convention.

Malaysia has 13 halal standards, which not only certify food items as well as food premises, but also cosmetics, personal care, pharmaceuticals and logistics.

This, when compared with many countries in the region — particularly those with sizeable Muslim populations — further cements the country's trailblazing position in the global halal industry.

Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC) chief executive officer Datuk Seri Jamil Bidin said most countries had only begun or have yet to go beyond the food industry.

Apart from the food and pharmaceutical industry, among others, Jamal said Malaysian halal industry players had also been actively producing halal vaccines, nutraceutical products (dietary supplements and medicinal food ingredients) as well as devices that are used during medical operations.

"These sectors have seen various new products and developments.

"As for the nutraceutical sector, there are emerging big companies such as the Chemical Company of Malaysia which produces halal supplements.

"In the services area, the industry is focusing on halal logistics and healthcare and we have KPJ Healthcare Bhd, for example, which has been providing halal treatment options to patients," he told the *New Sunday Times*.

Malaysia is the only country in the world where the halal industry development agenda is backed by the government, which translates into the existence of a unique ecosystem that allows a synergy between the private and public sectors.

"In this ecosystem, we have the private players focusing on production, manufacturing and services, while the public agencies, like HDC and the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim), facilitate and coordinate the industry's progress by providing certification and training.

"You don't see this kind of collaboration anywhere else in the world.

"In most countries, private players would dominate their halal industries," he said.

Jakim Halal Hub director Datuk Dr Sirajuddin Suhaimee said Malaysia had been producing halal pharmaceuticals (HPs) since 2014 as under halal certification, the seven schemes included food, logistics, manufacturing, cosmetics, slaughterhouses, consumer goods (such as toiletries) and pharmaceuticals.

"For each scheme, there is a specialist team overseeing the certification process and they will collaborate with industries.

"For cosmetics, we collaborate with the Cosmetic, Toiletries and Fragrance Association while for manufacturing, we have the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers.

"We work closely to support and complement each other.

"For instance, when they face issues on pharmaceutical products, we will work together to solve the issues, especially how to produce HPs," he said.

Sirajuddin added that the hub also had a committee that consisted of experts and researchers from higher learning institutions, that looked at all the issues and problems faced by industries in fulfilling the requirements of Malaysian halal standards.

Another committee, he said, will be formed to come up with a first-of-its-kind pharmacopeia (an encyclopedia on HPs), which is expected to be out by 2020.

"The pharmacopoeia will not only be a reference for industry players who are interested in producing HPs but a guide for consumers to make better-informed purchasing decisions."

The aggressive efforts by halal industry players, including HDC, augur well for the country's economic growth, bringing healthy returns and creating employment opportunities, Jamil said.

"Before HDC was established 10 years ago, everybody was talking about certification but that alone did not bring returns to the economy as it was just a process.

"Years after HDC was formed, we are able to see real returns for our economy, which come from sales and exports of products, job creation as well as investments," he said.

According to Jamil, the halal industry contributes over seven per cent to the nation's gross domestic product.

It has also exported RM42 billion worth of halal products, attracted RM12 billion in investments and generated almost 250,000 jobs so far.

Despite the existing comprehensive standards, he said the country's halal certification system had room for improvement to retain its leading position in the global halal industry.

"Our system does not only look at the Islamic or syariah requirements but also the hygiene and safety aspects which have been part and parcel of our standards for a long time.

"Moving forward, however, the standards should also take into account environmental issues, adopt fair trade practices and ward off child labour, to be on a par with European standards.

"This is because, in the concept of halal toyyiban (permissible for consumption), the word 'toyyiban' means good things, so it also means good for the environment and the different segments of society," he said.

15. Another Kelantan sergeant arrested for graft in less than a week



KOTA BARU: A police sergeant was arrested by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) on Tuesday for allegedly soliciting and receiving a bribe of RM1,800 from a suspected drug pusher in exchange for not pursuing a drug case.

The 50-year-old sergeant, who is attached to the Kota Baru Police station, was arrested at a restaurant in Pengkalan Datu here at about 3pm.

It is learnt that he had asked for the bribe just hours before being arrested.

Kelantan MACC director Datuk Moh Shamsudin Yusof said the sergeant will be remanded on Wednesday to facilitate an investigation.

Tuesday's arrest is the second alleged corruption case involving a state policeman.

Last week, a 29-year-old policeman - also a sergeant - was detained by the MACC for allegedly soliciting and receiving a bribe of RM2,000 in exchange for releasing a detainee whose urine had tested positive for illicit drugs.

16. National Anti-Drugs Agency staff nabbed for soliciting bribe from drug suspect



KOTA BARU: Barely 24 hours after arresting a police sergeant for alleged bribery, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) made another arrest today.

This time it involved a National Anti- Drug Agency (NADA) staff who had allegedly solicited and received a bribe of RM500.

Kelantan MACC director Datuk Moh Samsuddin Yusof said the 50-year-old NADA staff, attached to the agency's office in Tanah Merah, was detained by MACC officers about 5.35pm in Tanah Merah.

He is believed to have sought a bribe from a suspected drug addict.

Moh said the staff would be remanded tomorrow.

Yesterday, state MACC officers had detained a 50-year-old police sergeant for allegedly soliciting and receiving a bribe of RM1,800 from a man in exchange for not pursuing a drug case.

17. Selection of contractors for govt projects must be via open tender, says PAC



The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Datuk Seri Hasan Arifin. Pix by Yazit Razali

KUALA LUMPUR: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) today stressed that the selection of contractors for government projects must be done through open tender.

These include the construction of religious secondary schools (SMKA).

PAC chairman Datuk Seri Hasan Arifin said the projects must also be implemented by the Public Works Department (PWD).

"The tender process should be carried out only upon approval of the local authorities to avoid any problems on the site.

"Strict action should be taken against contractors, consultants and suppliers if they fail to supply or install project components, especially if it affects the project's functionality," he said in a statement.

The Rompin Member of Parliament added that contractors and consultants who fail to implement projects in accordance with the tender should be blacklisted as a lesson to others.

In a meeting on March 18, the PAC had summoned Education Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Alias Ahmad to clarify issues related to the management of SMKA construction projects.

The matter was raised in the 2014 Series 3 Auditor-General Report presented to Parliament on Nov 23, 2015.

Matters raised included late issuance of the Letter of Acceptance, late contract signing, impractical construction design and unsatisfactory quality of work.

Hasan said the PAC concluded from the meeting that SMKA projects - which were awarded through direct negotiation or limited tender and monitored by consultants - had faced problems.

"The consultants failed to ensure that contractors complied with the designs provided such as in the case of the elevator mains not being according to size," he explained.

Hasan said the consultancy company also lacked experienced staff at the project site for monitoring purposes, resulting in a lot of work not carried out according to specifications.

18. MACC: Investigation papers on illegal carbon factory, FGV to be submitted to AGC soon

BUKIT MERTAJAM: The investigation papers into two controversial cases being probed by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) will be submitted to the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC) soon.

The two cases include the illegal carbon filter factory in Sungai Lembu and the Felda Global Ventures Holdings Bhd (FGV) scandal.

ADVERTISING

Its chief commissioner Tan Sri Dzulkifli Ahmad said the MACC is "tying up the loose ends" in both cases before referring the matter to the AGC.

"We will leave it to the AGC to decide (whether there will be any prosecution for both cases)," he told reporters after presenting aid to flood victims in Taman Makok here today.

The event was organised by several non-governmental organisations.

Present were state MACC director Datuk Abdul Aziz Aban and Jaringan Melayu Malaysia (JMM) president Datuk Azwanddin Hamzah.

Nearly 600 flood victims received mattresses, pillows, clothing and food.

On the illegal carbon factory case, Dzulkilfi said the MACC will not set a time frame when investigations will be concluded.

On the case involving FGV, he said investigations have been completed.

The MACC and other government agencies raided the illegal factory in Sungai Lembu on Aug 10 following complaints by local residents.

State Environment Committee chairman Phee Boon Poh was arrested the following day after his office on the 53rd floor of Komtar was raided by the MACC. Also detained were the factory's 70-year-old manager and his 37-year-old son, a director.

On Aug 13, the MACC raided Phee's service centre and two houses in Taman Dahlia and Sungai Puyu here. Phee is Sungai Puyu assemblyman.

The MACC is investigating Phee for allegedly issuing two letters to the Seberang Prai Municipal Council ordering it to delay action against the illegal factory.

Meanwhile, on the FGV scandal, the MACC is probing into at least six areas that warranted attention, including abuse of power by a top official who had allowed the company to foot his wife's travels on first-class flights despite not being entitled to such benefits.

The MACC has in its custody documents related to a condominium renovation project that was said to have been awarded to the same official's crony.

MACC was also said to be looking into the expansion of FGV's agreements with Cambridge Nanosystems, involving about £100 million (RM551 million).

19. Kedah gov't to meet with agencies singled out for weaknesses in AG's report



Kedah Housing and Local Government, Water Supply, Water Resources and Energy committee chairman Datuk Badrul Hisham Hashim (centre) with Kolej Poly-Tech MARA Alor Star branch Deputy director Khairul Nizam Shuib (3rd from right) cut the cake during the charity programme organised by the college.

ALOR STAR: The Kedah state government will meet up with three state agencies identified as having weaknesses by the 2016 Auditor General's Report's (AGR) second series, released on Monday.

Kedah Housing and Local Government, Water Supply, Water Resources and Energy committee chairman Datuk Badrul Hisham Hashim said the state takes heed of the findings of the report, and will take necessary action to correct any shortcomings.

He did not deny that there are loopholes in the services provided by the local government, and therefore, room for improvement.

Badrul said that the state government will ask the agencies to look into the mistakes highlighted by the AGR and find suitable measures to solve them.

"We believe there is room for improvement, so we will meet with them and discuss ways to correct the weaknesses," he told reporters when met after attending a charity programme organised by Kolej Poly-Tech Mara with underprivileged children here on Tuesday.

It was reported that AGR identified several weaknesses at three state agencies - the Kedah Islamic Religious Council, the Alor Star City Council and the Kedah State Development Corporation (PKNK).

According to the report, Baitulmal property management under the Religious Council needs to be improved, as records showed that a parcel of land it owns is poorly maintained.

"Maintenance and repair work at 20 playgrounds under the City Council were not properly carried out; while landscaping work at the Seri Gemilang Flats, carried out under the National Blue Ocean Strategy, was poorly maintained," the AGR said.

The report also spotted weaknesses at PKNK Hotels Sdn Bhd, particularly with regard to the number of rooms and seminar rooms rented out.

It pointed out that PKNK Hotels have been remiss in its corporate planning.

20. MACC's bauxite seizure, moratorium helps control outflow of mineral, says Pahang MB



Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob (left) speaks during the state assembly sitting in Wisma Sri Pahang.

KUANTAN: Prior to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's (MACC) seizure of all bauxite stockpiles in August, some operators were found to be mining and exporting the lucrative mineral without Approved Permits (AP).

Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said by not getting the AP from the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry, these owners of bauxite stockpiles and related operators were conducting mining and transporting of the mineral illegally.

"The issuance of special AP were for higher amounts of bauxite compared to the actual quantity at the stockpiles. This led to unlawful mining and transporting activities in order to match the quantities approved," he said during the state assembly sitting here today.

He was answering a question from Datuk Fong Koong Fuee (BN-Cheka) on problem of bauxite-mining activities that flouted the moratorium, which had been enforced since January 15 last year.

Adnan said checks by Pahang Lands and Mines Office found that bauxite-mining activities only came to a complete halt when MACC confiscated 10 million tonnes of the mineral three months ago.

"The bauxite problem is caused by human greed. I remember that when the issue was at its peak, I had called up the operators and warned them that if they did not abide by regulations, the federal government will take over and they will go bankrupt.

"That turned out to be true as many (operators) had 'gulung tikar' (went bankrupt) afterwards," he said, adding that at one point a lorry driver could earn between RM7,000 and RM11,000 a month from transporting bauxite.

Adnan said that prior to the MACC seizure of the stockpiles, some operators were even transporting out bauxite from the mining areas without abiding by the regulatory schedule of 8am to 12pm and 2pm to 4pm.

"However, with the moratorium (in place), all settled down (cease of bauxite-mining and its related consequences)," he said.

To an additional question from Andansura Rabu (Pas-Beserah) on whether the state government plans to bury the disused bauxite mines here, Adnan said such matter should be carried out by the owners of the land.

"However, they were not earnest in closing (the mines). Despite giving promises that they would close the mines, no efforts were made despite having been paid deposits (by the mining operators) to do so." he said.

Around 30 bauxite mines throughout the district here are subject to the moratorium, which expires on Dec 31.

21. AG's Report 2016: UPSI accumulates RM75.10m in unused development allocations



Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) received RM161.02 million in development allocations between 2013 and 2016.

KUALA LUMPUR: Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) had been flagged up in the Auditor-General's Report 2016 Series 2 for accumulating RM75.10 million in unused development allocations from 2013 to 2016.

According to the report, a large portion of the surplus funds was put in fixed deposit amounting to RM81.5 million in 2015 and RM66.9 million in 2016.

"A large portion of UPSI's unused allocations received from the Higher Education Ministry was for development.

"For the period between 2013 and 2016, UPSI received RM161.02 million in development allocations. However, the allocations spent amounted to only RM3.96 million to RM45.23 million," it noted.

According to the report, other weaknesses included spending RM61,051 on empowering Bahasa Melayu and strengthening English among teachers as well as primary and secondary students before it was approved.

It said the assigning power to sign a contract was irregular, resulting in 24 letters of acceptance involving RM91.75 million signed by an unauthorised officer.

The procurement of transport services and equipment totalling RM0.49 million was carried out without the approval of officers and the extension of time (EOT) approval which contradicted the contract/rules, causing UPSI unable to impose a payment of RM0.49 million for LAD (liquidated and ascertained damages).

Apart from that, 62 (88.57 per cent) of the 70 contract cleansing workers did not receive EPF contributions from their employer while 14 (66.67 per cent) out of 21 contract workers did not receive Socso contributions.

As such, to ensure proper and efficient UPSI procurement management, the university has been told to set up an investigation committee to check and overcome the weaknesses in its procurement system.

22. AG's Report 2016: Finance Ministry to work on improving operational efficiency of related ministries



Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah (left) with Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim during the launch of the #2GetHer programme in Cyberjaya.

CYBERJAYA: The Finance Ministry is set to work with all ministries to improve their operational efficiency in terms of project implementation, following the Auditor General's 2016 Report Series 2 released yesterday.

Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah said the report did not emphasised on fraud or misuse of funds, instead it focused on the poor performances by several ministries and government agencies.

"The report mainly touched on operational aspects and certain areas that needed to be tightened up.

"We will work with all ministries, Chief Secretary to the Government (Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa) and secretaries-general, to study how we can improve the operational efficiency.

"There is nothing on misuse of funds or anything like that," he told reporters after the soft launch of eFM online radio station at Futurise Centre, here.

During the tabling of the report in Dewan Rakyat yesterday, Auditor-General Tan Sri Dr Madinah Mohamad said there were 240 recommendations being made, aimed at correcting and improving weaknesses in the public sector.

She said 74 of the recommendations related to activities of federal ministries, departments and statutory bodies; 36 were on management of federal government companies and agencies; and 130 were on activities management by ministries, departments, agencies and management of state government companies.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) said it would summon Youth and Sports Ministry to clarify expenditure on the construction of a sporting venue. PAC will also summon Rural and Regional Development Ministry; Bintulu Port Authority and Malaysian Venture Capital Management Bhd.

On another matter, Irwan said the government has started to carry out several programmes and projects as highlighted in the 2018 Budget such as Women Empowerment and 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) programmes.

"We have just launched the Women Empowerment programme to ensure that 30 per cent of board directors in government-linked companies, government-linked investment companies and statutory bodies consist of women.

"We have also opened the application for 2018 BR1M scheme. For some development projects which have been approved by the government, we start off with the design work and pre-tender first. This will expedite the project implementation," he said.

On the eFM online radio station, he said it is an initiative by Global Entrepreneurship Movement to inspire, educate and inform entrepreneurs by providing business insights and entrepreneurial trends.

Irwan said eFM would provide a platform for the entrepreneurs to communicate and share knowledge on entrepreneurship.

23. Allocation for Yayasan Prihatin won't affect MACC's integrity



Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Paul Low says the RM5 million allocation will not affect or compromise the integrity and professionalism of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

KUALA LUMPUR: The RM5 million allocation that the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's foundation, Yayasan Prihatin, receives from the government will not compromise its integrity.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Paul Low said the contribution would not affect or compromise the integrity and professionalism of MACC as its execution of duties are based on the jurisdiction stipulated under the MACC Act 2009.

Low was responding to Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Gelang Patah) who had raised concerns over the allocation, which was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak on Oct 1 to aid the welfare of MACC officers.

Lim had also asked if the allocation would compromise the integrity and professionalism of MACC officers.

Low, in response, clarified that the foundation has yet to receive the allocation which is still being processed under the Finance Ministry.

"The funds are from government allocation, applied and acquired according to financial procedures.

"Investigations carried out on anyone is based on evidence, facts and statements of the case without prejudice against any party," noted the minister.

Low also said the operations and functions of the commission would be monitored by five entities, namely the Anti-Corruption Advisory Board (ACAB), the Special Committee on Corruption (SCC) and

Complaints Committee (CC) Operations Review Panel (ORP) as well as the Consultation and Corruption Prevention Panel (CCPP).

He said the entities are also responsible for ensuring the integrity and professionalism of the graft-busting agency.

24. Selangor MB's nephew remanded over illegal sand-mining case

PUTRAJAYA: Four individuals including the nephew of Selangor Menteri Besar, have been remanded for seven days for their alleged involvement in illegal sand and gravel-mining activities in Selangor today.

An investigation launched by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) revealed that a sand mining company had allegedly bribed local government officers in Kajang, where the company has been operating since 2014.

It was understood the officers were allegedly bribed to not to take actions against the activities.

Nuzul Fadhli and three other individuals have been remanded in the Session Court here at 9.30am, confirmed a spokesperson from MACC.

The four suspects will be remanded for seven days until Dec 6.

Magistrate Ainna Sherina Saipol Amin granted the remand order under Section 16 (b)(B) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009 for soliciting bribery.

Garbed in "Lokap SPRM" bright orange T-shirts, the four suspects, comprising two company directors, one site manager and an advertising agency employee covered their faces as they were escorted out of the court by MACC personnel.

The suspects, aged between 34 and 67, were arrested in a special operation which started at 10am yesterday.

Following the arrests, MACC has also frozen RM4 million from the company's bank account.

25. Bank Negara losses significantly negative impact on economy



The Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) report confirms that Bank Negara Malaysia incurred losses amounting to RM31.5 billion due to the trading between 1992 and 1994.

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's development was greatly impacted by the losses incurred through Bank Negara Malaysia's (BNM) foreign exchange (forex) trading between 1992 and 1994.

The Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) into the losses found that the losses had a significantly bad impact on the economy as it deprived the country of opportunities for growth.

"It also impaired Bank Negara's ability to fulfil its mandated role as the country's central bank," said the report on the RCI findings which was tabled in Dewan Rakyat today

The report confirmed that the central bank incurred losses amounting to RM31.5 billion due to the trading between 1992 and 1994.

"BNM's report entitled Accounting Treatment of Losses Arising from Active Reserve Management 1988-1994 (Accounting Treatment Report) stated clearly that losses of RM31.5 billion were incurred from 1992 to 1994 through forex dealings.

"As this internal compilation dated April 18, 2007 was based on formal records of the Bank, the Commission has no doubt about the report's accuracy," added the report.

The losses were consistent with the figures referred to in the Audit Report on Foreign Exchange Operation Division of Banking Department and Processing Section of Accounts Department as at Dec 31, 1992 dated Jan 21, 1994, pertaining to an investigation into BNM's forex losses amounting to RM12.35bil in 1992.

A letter by the Auditor General also specified a loss of RM15.29bil for 1993 and the 438th BNM's Board Minutes dated Feb 15, 1995 reported a loss of RM3.86bil for 1994.