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1. Najib's 1MDB trial to resume on April 15



The trial of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak who is facing corruption and money laundering charges has been postponed again.

KUALA LUMPUR: The trial of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak who is facing corruption and money laundering charges involving RM2.3 billion of 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) funds has been postponed again.

Deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib said the trial which was supposed to resume before High Court Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah yesterday has been postponed to April 15 following the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO).

"We received an email from the court on March 30 notifying that the trial will resume on April 15," he told Bernama via Whatsapp message today.

The court had previously set March 2-13, 19-20, 23-27 and 30-31; April 1-30; and May 4-8, 11-22 inclusive of Fridays for the 1MDB trial.

The court also fixed the entire month of June, July, August, September and October, including Fridays for the case.

When the hearing resumes, defence lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah is expected to continue with cross-examination of the ninth prosecution witness, former 1MDB chief executive officer Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, who has been on the stand since Sept 23 last year.

Najib, 67, faces four charges of abusing his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.3 billion in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

2. Submission of Isa Samad's corruption case postponed to April 21



The High Court has fixed April 21 for submission by parties in the corruption case of former Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad, who is facing one charge of criminal breach of trust and nine charges of receiving bribes, totalling more than RM3 million.

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court has fixed April 21 for submission by parties in the corruption case of former Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad, who is facing one charge of criminal breach of trust and nine charges of receiving bribes, totalling more than RM3 million.

It was earlier fixed for April 8, but due to the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO) from March 31 to April 14, the hearing had to be postponed to April 21.

The prosecution in the case, deputy public prosecutor Afzainizam Abdul Aziz, informed Bernama on the new date when contacted today.

The prosecution closed its case last Jan 14 after a 15-day trial during which 15 witnesses were called to testify.

Mohd Isa, 71, is charged with one count of criminal breach of trust (CBT) and nine counts of receiving bribes of more than RM3 million in connection with the purchase of Merdeka Palace Hotel & Suites in Kuching, Sarawak, by FICSB.

The offences were allegedly committed at the Felda Tower, Platinum Park, No. 11, Persiaran KLCC here, between April 29, 2014 and Dec 15, 2015.

3. Najib's SRC written submissions rescheduled to April 28



The High Court here today rescheduled submissions hearing dates in Datuk Seri Najib Razak's SRC International Sdn Bhd trial as the defence has been hindered by the ongoing Movement Control Order (MCO).

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court here today rescheduled submissions hearing dates in Datuk Seri Najib Razak's SRC International Sdn Bhd trial as the defence has been hindered by the ongoing Movement Control Order (MCO).

High Court deputy registrar Mahyuddin Md Som said the court fixed April 28 for the defence to file their written submissions while the prosecution must reply to the written submissions on May 12.

"This is following a request by the defence's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah for an extension of two weeks to file written submission in view of the current MCO.

"The prosecution had no objection to the request. High Court judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali allowed the request, however. He gave an extension of one week," he said.

Earlier, the court set April 21 as the deadline to submit written submissions.

Mahyuddin said the court also fixed hearings for oral submissions for three days from May 18 to May 20.

"Therefore, the dates for oral submissions which were previously set on May 13 and May 15 are vacated," he added.

On March 11, the defence closed its case after calling 19 witnesses, after the defence trial ran for 33 days since Dec 3 last year.

On Nov 11 last year, Najib was ordered to enter his defence on seven charges of misappropriating RM42 million in SRC International Sdn Bhd funds, comprising three counts of criminal breach of trust (CBT), three counts of money laundering and one count of abuse of position in relation to the SRC funds.

4. Najib's 1MDB trial postponed to April 29



The high-profile trial of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak who is facing corruption and money laundering charges involving RM2.3 billion of 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) funds has been postponed again.

KUALA LUMPUR: The high-profile trial of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak who is facing corruption and money laundering charges involving RM2.3 billion of 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) funds has been postponed again.

Deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib said the trial which was supposed to resume on April 15 before High Court Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah has been postponed to April 29 following the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO).

The court had previously set March 2-13, 19-20, 23-27 and 30-31; April 1-30; and May 4-8, 11-22 inclusive of Fridays for the 1MDB trial.

Another dates fixed was the entire month of June, July, August, September and October, including Fridays.

When the hearing resumes, defence lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah is expected to continue with cross-examination of the ninth prosecution witness, former 1MDB chief executive officer Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, who has been on the stand since Sept 23 last year.

Najib, 67, faces four charges of abusing his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.3 billion in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

5. US returns RM1.29 billion of 1MDB money to Malaysia



The US Justice Department says it had returned US\$300 million (RM1.29 billion) in funds stolen in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) corruption scandal to the Malaysia.

WASHINGTON: The US Justice Department announced on Tuesday it had sent US\$300 million (RM1.29 billion) in funds stolen in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) corruption scandal to the government that had been laundered through the global financial system.

Combined with other funds handed over nearly one year ago, the Justice Department said it has now returned or helped Malaysia recover more than US\$1 billion in funds and assets lost in the scam.

"The repatriation of these stolen funds to the citizens of Malaysia is the result of the tireless efforts of prosecutors and federal agents to prevent foreign kleptocrats and their associates from using the United States as a playground where they can enjoy the fruits of their pilfered wealth," said US Attorney Nick Hanna in a statement.

"The amount of money stolen from the people of Malaysia is staggering, and we have been relentless in recovering assets that always should have been used for their benefit."

The money was a part of the more than US\$4.5 billion that US investigators say was looted from the state-owned investment firm, with alleged help from ex-Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his inner circle.

The US says that from 2009 to 2015, high-level officials of 1MDB and a high-flying young businessman named Low Taek Jho, aka Jho Low, siphoned off the billions originally meant to fund state investments.

Low used a lot of the money to buy luxurious homes and top-level art and invest in Hollywood movies, including the Martin Scorsese hit "Wolf of Wall Street."

The Justice Department seized most of Low's assets and has been slowly liquidating them for return to Malaysia.

6. Case management of ex-AmBank manager's bid to strike out Najib's suit



The High Court here has set a new date for case management of former AmBank relationship manager application to strike out a suit filed by former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court here has set a new date for case management of former AmBank relationship manager Joanna Yu Ging Ping's application to strike out a suit filed by former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak against her for mismanagement of his bank accounts.

Lawyer Datuk Dr Gurdial Singh Nijar, representing Yu, said that the hearing of the application was earlier fixed for today before Judge Datuk Khadijah Idris, but it was vacated following the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the government.

"The court has set May 15 for next case management to fix the hearing dates," he said.

Najib, through Messrs Shafee & Co, had filed the suit on Dec 9 last year at the High Court and named AmBank, AMMB Holdings Berhad and Yu as the defendants.

According to the statement of claim, Najib alleged AmBank and Yu had committed negligence when handling his bank accounts (ending with 694, 880, 898 and 906) by disclosing it to fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho or Jho Low.

Najib claimed that the defendants without authorisation had disclosed his bank statements, debit and credit remittance transactions, and balance of funds of account 694 to Low as the third party.

He contended that the defendants did not engage with him to report on Low's action regarding the bank account and that the bank had facilitated unauthorised third party to make money transfers between accounts 880, 898 and 906.

The Pekan Member of Parliament claimed that he had been kept in the dark on the details of his own bank accounts' statements and other related documents by the bank under Low's instruction.

He alleged that Low, with the help of other unauthorised third parties, had made 20 transactions to regularise the accounts totalling RM12 million through several local and foreign remittances of funds and that the accounts had been 'red-flagged' by Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM).

Najib, who is also former finance minister, said the defendants failed to report and get direct instructions from him, despite the accounts being red-flagged.

He claimed that he only discovered the act committed by the defendants during the SRC International trial after the prosecution revealed the conversations between Yu and the third parties.

He is seeking special, general, aggravated and exemplary damages from the defendants.

7. PM thanks US for return of RM1.29 billion of 1MDB funds



Muhyiddin has thanked the US government for facilitating the return of US\$300 million (RM1.29 billion) of misappropriated 1MDB funds.

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has thanked the United States government for facilitating the return of US\$300 million (RM1.29 billion) of misappropriated 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) funds.

The announcement of the funds' repatriation was made today by the US Department of Justice (DOJ), as part of its Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiatives.

"I would like to express my gratitude to the US government, particularly the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, on their excellent assistance and cooperation in facilitating the return of the US\$300 million.

"I would also like to commend Malaysia's Minister of Finance and the Attorney-General for their role in the negotiation process," Muhyiddin said.

The Prime Minister added that the funds include proceeds from the liquidated assets of fugitive Malaysian businessman Low Taek Jho, or Jho Low.

"On Oct 30, 2019, Malaysian fugitive Jho Low reached a settlement with the DOJ pertaining to numerous forfeiture claims filed by the DOJ against assets he had purchased using 1MDB money.

"The US\$300 million represents some of those assets which had been forfeited and later sold.

"It also includes proceeds from 1MDB-linked assets that were given up or forfeited by individuals linked to Jho Low," he said in a statement today.

As of now, Muhyiddin said the government has managed to recover a total US\$620 million (RM 2.68 billion) of 1MDB money in the form of sales proceeds or assets.

He said the process to sell Jho Low's remaining forfeited assets under the DOJ's consent forfeiture judgment is currently ongoing.

The Prime Minister added that the recovery of more 1MDB assets is in progress, and that the government will continue to work with the DOJ as well as other governments to repatriate more 1MDB money in the future.

The US government previously said that high-level officials of 1MDB and Jho Low siphoned off billions originally meant to fund state investments from 2009 to 2015.

Low used much of the money to purchase luxurious homes and top-level art and invest in Hollywood movies, including the Martin Scorsese hit "Wolf of Wall Street."

The DOJ has seized most of Low's assets and has been slowly liquidating them for return to Malaysia.

8. Committal proceedings against Lokman Adam to proceed



Committal proceedings against former Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Lokman Noor Adam (right), will proceed as usual.

KUALA LUMPUR: Committal proceedings against former Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Lokman Noor Adam, which was initiated by former Attorney-General Tan Sri Tommy Thomas, will proceed as usual.

Deputy public prosecutor Mohamad Mustaffa P. Kunyalam said the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC) will continue with the case as the action was made on behalf of the AGC's office and not in Thomas' personal capacity.

"As of now, the instruction is to proceed with the case. In fact, today was fixed to hear the committal proceeding against Lokman Adam for allegedly intimidating a witness in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) trial.

"However, it was vacated due to the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the government... a new date will be fixed by the High Court after the MCO ends," he said.

The witness referred to is former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's former special officer, Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin.

Thomas, 68, who was appointed by then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on June 4, 2018, for a two-year term to replace Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali, resigned from the post on Feb 29, this year.

On March 6, this year, Federal Court judge Tan Sri Idrus Harun was appointed to replace Thomas as the A-G.

Thomas initiated the committal proceeding against Lokman seeking an order for Lokman to be committed to prison or be fined for his action.

According to Thomas, on Sept 25 last year, Lokman had uttered words in a video interview, constituting an express or implied threat against Amhari Efendi, for having given evidence in Najib's trial at the High Court.

Thomas said that on the same day, Lokman lodged a police report against Amhari Efendi, who was the eighth prosecution witness, in respect of the evidence given by him at the former prime minister's trial.

The object or purpose of the respondent's act, said the A-G, was to harass and intimidate Amhari Efendi, other witnesses and any potential witnesses who may come forward to give evidence against Najib in the 1MDB trial.

9. 1MDB: Kedah Umno, Habib Jewels monies yet to be returned by MACC



Kedah Umno liaison committee and Habib Jewels Sdn Bhd's monies which were seized by the MACC, have not been returned to both entities

KUALA LUMPUR: Kedah Umno liaison committee and Habib Jewels Sdn Bhd's monies amounting to RM1.05 million and RM100,000 respectively, which were seized by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), have not been returned to both entities pending a stay application by the prosecution.

Deputy public prosecutor Abdul Rashid Sulaiman confirmed this when contacted by Bernama today.

The two entities allegedly received the monies, believed to be linked to the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal, from former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Meanwhile, High Court deputy registrar Mahyuddin Md Som said the case management of the prosecution's application for a stay of the court's ruling to dismiss its applications to forfeit RM1.15 million from the two entities, which was initially scheduled for today, was vacated following the extension of the Movement Control Order (MCO) to April 28.

"The court has set June 9 for the next case management. I had informed both parties about the matter via email yesterday," he said.

On Dec 13, last year, High Court judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali rejected the prosecution's applications on grounds that it had failed to prove its civil forfeiture cases against the two entities.

The prosecution had also filed an appeal at the Court of Appeal on Dec 16 last year against the High Court's decision.

In June last year, the *MACC* filed a civil forfeiture suit against 41 entities, comprising individuals, companies and political parties, under the *Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing Act* to recover about RM270 million believed to be linked to 1MDB.

MACC believed the money was illegally transferred from Najib's bank accounts

10. Trader in Johor arrested for bribing enforcement personnel



A trader was arrested by the MACC yesterday for allegedly offering a bribe to a Kluang MPK enforcement personnel

JOHOR BARU: A trader was arrested by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) yesterday for allegedly offering a bribe to a Kluang Municipal Council (MPK) enforcement personnel.

The suspect, who sells communications equipment, was alleged to have offered RM500 to an MPK enforcement personnel as an inducement for not taking action against him for ignoring a notice by opening his business during the Movement Control Order (MCO).

"The 36-year-old suspect was earlier issued a compound by MPK for committing an offence of ignoring a notice for the second time under Section 109 of the Local Government Act.

"He was arrested at the Kluang MACC office at 2pm yesterday to help in the investigation.

"He was released on bail after his statement was taken and the case is being investigated under Section 17(b) of the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission Act 2009," MACC said in a statement.

MACC investigation division director Datuk Norazlan Mohd Razali confirmed the arrest.

He also reminded the public not to get involved in corrupt practises as the commission would act on any report lodged, even during the MCO period.

11. NFCC necessary to fight financial crimes, strength governance

KUALA LUMPUR: The establishment of the National Anti-Financial Crimes Act (NFCC) is seen as a necessary step towards better enforcement coordination against financial crimes and strengthening confidence in the governance system in Malaysia.

The Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MICCI) said the NFCC would restore investors' confidence in Malaysia and attract more foreign investments.

President Datuk CK Tan said the right and necessary step towards the reforms needed to fight not only financial crimes but also ancillary issues.

"This includes smuggling and money laundering that ultimately impact investments and the proper running of the economy," he said in a statement recently.

With over 1,000 members comprising domestic and multinational companies, MICCI strongly supports the development of legitimate businesses and ensuring a level playing field in the economy.

"Our members see this issue as critically important in determining investment levels in Malaysia.

"In the end, this is all about strengthening the legal economy and legitimate businesses and not lose out to the dark economy, which not only do not benefit society but harms the country overall," he added.

Tan said MICCI seeks to support the NFCC in various ways and in particular would act as a private sector consultative body that could provide requisite advice as well as create awareness on good governance practices.

"The aim ultimately is not just about enforcing against financial crimes. It is also to have a strong level of awareness to prevent such crimes. This is where we will focus our support to the NFCC."

Tan said MICCI has spearheaded the drive for greater ethics and integrity in business transactions, citing that only a corruption-free system will enable all participants to compete on a level-playing field.

MICCI has also emphasised the critical role of corporate compliance and responsibility through self-imposed rules with legal obligations in a more natural, effective, and sustainable manner while supporting the birth of the NFCC.

In view of supporting the Malaysia's National Anti-Corruption Plan 2019-2023, he said NFCC will help coordinate the efforts of 12 existing enforcement agencies, including the Royal Malaysian

Police, Customs Department, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, Inland Revenue Board and Bank Negara.

NFCC coordination and collaborations will cover operations into financial crimes committed locally and abroad by enhancing cooperation between different law enforcement agencies will also involve the private sector.

This includes cases of money laundering, tax evasion, corruption and smuggling.

12. Submission on Najib's SRC case on June 1



The High Court has set June 1 to hear oral submissions on former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's SRC International Sdn Bhd.

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court will hear oral submissions on former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's SRC International Sdn Bhd case for three consecutive days beginning June 1.

Ad-hoc prosecutor Datuk V. Sithambaram told Bernama that the previous dates which were fixed from May 18 to May 20 had been vacated.

He said the court also fixed May 5 for both defence and prosecution to file their written submissions while May 19 was set for both parties to reply their written submissions.

"Earlier, the court fixed April 28 for us to file our written submissions, but it was rescheduled after court allows the defence's request for an extension due to Movement Control Order (MCO)," he said.

On March 11, the defence closed its case after calling 19 witnesses during the defence trial that ran for 33 days since Dec 3 last year.

The prosecution had earlier called 57 witnesses to the stand.

On Nov 11 last year, the former finance minister was ordered to enter his defence on seven charges of misappropriating RM42 million in SRC International Sdn Bhd funds, comprising three counts of criminal breach of trust (CBT), three counts of money laundering and one count of abuse of position in relation to the SRC funds.