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1. Jho Low denies being 'mastermind' behind 1MDB



Fugitive financier Low Taek Jho has consistently denied wrongdoing and says the charges against him are politically motivated.

KUALA LUMPUR: Fugitive financier Low Taek Jho has said he only acted as an intermediary for deals involving 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), denying in an interview published on Monday that he had set the stage for the theft of billions of dollars from the state fund.

Low faces charges in the United States and Malaysia for his alleged central role in defrauding up to US\$4.5 billion from 1MDB, founded by former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, and is the subject of the US Department of Justice's largest ever anti-kleptocracy case.

Low, or Jho Low as he is popularly known, has consistently denied wrongdoing and says the charges against him are politically motivated.

"People and companies act as introducers or intermediaries all the time," Low said in an interview with Singapore's Straits Times.

"This is not a unique situation. I was requested to assist because of my good relationships with influential foreign businessmen and decision makers."

A spokesman for Low did not immediately respond to a request for additional comments.

To a question on why he has remained on the run, Low said the Malaysian government has victimised him and his family, ignoring "basic human rights and fair judicial processes" by branding him as the mastermind behind the scandal.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Low said his "professional connections" had helped Malaysia build strong ties with key allies, particularly Saudi Arabia, boosting haj pilgrimage quotas for Malaysian Muslims and investments in financial, real estate and other sectors in the country.

Low declined to divulge his current location but confirmed he was offered asylum in August last year. He did not name the country offering asylum.

In November, US authorities struck a deal with Low to recoup US\$1 billion in funds allegedly looted from 1MDB, which included a private jet, high-end real estate in Beverly Hills, New York and London, and other assets.

The deal does not include an admission of guilt or wrongdoing and is not tied to the criminal action against Low.

Low - who said he has had "multiple brushes with cancer" - said he now plans to focus on investing in cutting-edge cancer research.

"I would cherish the opportunity to reinvigorate my philanthropic efforts and to give back to the community and help others in any way I can."

2. Najib: 'I was running the country, I had 1,001 things to do'



Former PM Datuk Seri Najib Razak insists that he previously admitted signatures on some SRC International Bhd-related documents were his due to the circumstances then.

KUALA LUMPUR: After dodging an attempt to impeach him, Datuk Seri Najib Razak became agitated today when pressed on his contradictory answers in court.

Najib insisted that he previously admitted signatures on some SRC International Bhd-related documents were his due to the circumstances then.

However, he argued that his stance has now changed because he has since found out that there were many "scams" going on.

He also lamented that he could not remember everything that happened relating to the case as many years had passed.

"All this happened nine years ago, you know.

"I signed tens of documents everyday. I was running the country, there were 1,001 things to do everyday," he said when lead prosecutor Datuk V. Sithambaram bombarded him with questions on his conflicting answers.

Najib had maintained that he previously admitted that signatures on the SRC International documents were his because he was only shown the documents briefly.

However, the 66-year-old Pekan member of parliament said he was now disputing the authenticity of his signatures on the documents because of developments in his case, especially after another witness had testified that his signature was also forged on some documents.

Sithambaram however disputed what Najib claimed by saying that the accused was just making up stories to mislead the court.

He said Najib had all this while admitted to the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) investigators the contents of SRC International documents and also acknowledged signing them.

The lead prosecutor in the case said it was only now that Najib was changing his story.

The trial before High Court Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali continues.

Najib is facing seven counts of criminal breach of trust, abuse of power and money laundering involving RM42-million of SRC International funds.

He is charged with committing the offences between Aug 17, 2011, and Feb 10, 2015.

He faces 20 years' jail and fine for the offences, if convicted.

3. Shafee: 'Jho Low is the number one crook'



Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low is the central culprit in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal and for him to claim to be a victim is "rubbish", Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said

KUALA LUMPUR: Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low is the central culprit in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal and for him to claim to be a victim is "rubbish", Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said.

"He is the number one crook. For him to say he is a victim because he is not a politician is totally rubbish.

"If you are not a politician, nobody would want to victimise you. It is only a politician that gets into trouble because there are other politicians who want to put you into trouble," he said.

Shafee said this in response to Jho Low's interview with the Singapore's Straits Times where the fugitive businessmen claimed he was being victimised for the 1MDB scandal just because he was not a politician.

He also claimed that the Malaysian government had victimised him and his family, ignoring "basic human rights and fair judicial processes" by branding him the mastermind behind the scandal.

However, Shafee said Jho Low was not telling the truth and accused the Penang-born businessman of being the central figure in the 1MDB scandal who organised everything.

"He organised everything including the financial institutions, bankers and all his cronies, who are actually his accomplices.

"They are in 1MDB, they are in SRC International Bhd and they are also overseas... but he is the central figure.

"He is trying to minimise his role," he said, adding Jho Low's accomplices had all joined the fugitive by running away from the country.

Shafee, who is the lead defence in Datuk Seri Najib Razak cases involving 1MDB and SRC International, said Jho Low's claim that he was being bullied was also total rubbish.

Shafee then went on to take a swipe at the authorities for failing to locate the fugitive.

"The Inspector General Police (IGP) made promises that he will get Jho Low but until today, nothing has been done," he said.

He alleged that the failure to bring Jho Low back was causing the country huge losses and the wrongdoers were not being punished.

He lamented that his client was also not getting the best defence because the main culprits like Jho Low could not be found.

"So is it purposely done, to deprive my client of the best defence? Because there are witnesses my client can use in order to interrogate them by way of cross-examination to prove my client's case.

"Without these people, now it is only my client telling his version... it is very difficult," he said

On Jho Low's claim that he will not get a fair trial in Malaysia, Shafee said the claim was baseless.

He said there was no reason for the fugitive to fear being tried here just like everyone else who was facing charges.

4. DPP turns the screw on Najib for giving 'ludicrous evidence' in court



Lead prosecutor Datuk V. Sithambaram had Najib against the ropes throughout the day over this line of defence which the accused had adopted

KUALA LUMPUR: It wasn't the best of days for Datuk Seri Najib Razak in court today as he not only had to deal with a crippling expose of his private conversations by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), but also face embarrassing accusations in connection with his SRC International Bhd case.

Aside from being accused of giving "ludicrous evidence" on the millions which came in and out of his personal bank accounts, the former prime minister also had to deflect pointed questions that he was blaming the whole world to save his own skin.

Lead prosecutor Datuk V. Sithambaram had Najib against the ropes throughout the day over this line of defence which the accused had adopted.

At one point, the senior criminal lawyer almost lost it when Najib kept saying that he never kept track of how much he had in his bank accounts as he left such details for others to manage.

His answer sparked Sithambaram off and the deputy public prosecutor didn't hold back when he said that one did not have to be a rocket scientist to realise how "ridiculous" it was for Najib to claim ignorance over such things when he was spending millions by issuing cheques for various purposes.

Today's hearing started with Sithambaram continuing with his cross-examination of the 66-year-old Pekan member of parliament over claims that Najib's bank accounts had been manipulated by others, including fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low.

Najib maintained that this was the case, but was left flustered when asked why anyone would manipulate his accounts by injecting millions into them for him to spend every sen of it.

Sithambaram: Your own lawyers calculated that Jho Low deposited between US\$80 million and US\$90 million into your accounts. This means money was put into your account and you spent it as you deemed fit or as you pleased, correct?

Najib: I suppose so, yes

Sithambaram: You have throughout this trial portrayed yourself as a victim of Jho Low's manipulation, correct?

Najib: Yes

Sithambaram: You must be the first victim of any manipulation to gain millions in your accounts.

Najib: I wouldn't know... I did not ask for it but you can put it that way if you want.

Sithambaram: That is the only way to put it. Usually victims of any manipulation lose money but here the manipulator lost money.

Najib: He could have made from other areas... I don't know.

Sithambaram: There is no way Jho Low was manipulating the personal bank accounts of the prime minister, who was also the finance minister and the most powerful figure in the country at that time. Do you agree?

Najib: I disagree

Sithambaram: Why would anyone want to put all this money into your account?

Najib: I don't want to speculate.

Sithambaram: Yes, because it will look silly!

Sithambaram then questioned Najib over his claims that he did not know millions were being pumped into his accounts because the bank statements had been kept hidden from him.

Najib stuck to his story about this, but was eventually forced to acknowledge that he himself had mandated former SRC International chief executive Nik Faisal Ariff Kamil to collect the statements on his behalf.

However, he only did so after Sithambaram debunked his claims that there was a blackberry conversation between Jho Low and his relationship manager from AmBank to keep his bank statements hidden from him.

Sithambaram: Let me clear that up. That one miserable conversation was about your credit card statement. The bank had sent one statement to your office and Jho Low immediately instructed the bank to never do it again as you did not want the statement falling into the wrong hands. It was your credit card statement and not your bank statement.

Najib: There was the conversation between Jho Low and Joanna Yu (Najib's relationship manager at AmBank).

Sithambaram: I put it to you that Jho Low was actually bankrolling you.

Najib: I disagree.

Sithambaram: Your evidence is ludicrous.

Najib: I disagree.

Sithambaram: You want to paint a picture that Jho Low fixed you by manipulating your bank accounts to escape liability from this case.

Najib: No, no, no.

Sithambaram: Can you explain why Jho Low will pay US\$90 million into your accounts?

Najib: I don't want to speculate.

Sithambaram: There is nothing to speculate. You agree that you spent the entire amount?

Najib: If that is what the accounts show then I spent it, yes.

Sithambaram: You spent it as if it was your money?

Najib: Because I was given the discretion to spend it for corporate social responsibility (CSR). In my mind the money was leftover from the Arab donation.

Sithambaram: Your evidence is completely untrue.

Najib: No.

Najib said he had believed all the time that the Arab donation was from the late Saudi ruler, King Abdullah Abdul Aziz Al Saud, but he did not verify when the money was deposited into his accounts.

"I received the money in good faith and I did not check when it was deposited into my accounts.

"However Bank Negara was aware of it," he said on the money he received between 2011 and 2014.

The trial before High Court Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali continues.

Najib is facing seven charges of criminal breach of trust, abuse of power and money laundering involving RM42 million of SRC International funds.

He faces 20 years jail and fine if convicted.

5. High Court acquits Najib's former aide of graft in solar project case



The High Court today acquitted Datuk Rizal Mansor of four counts of soliciting and receiving bribes on behalf of Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor for a RM218 million solar power supply and installation project

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court today acquitted Datuk Seri Najib Razak's former special officer Datuk Rizal Mansor of four counts of soliciting and receiving bribes on behalf of Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor for a RM218 million solar power supply and installation project.

Judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan made the decision after deputy public prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram told the court that the prosecution had withdrawn its charges against Rizal, 45.

Sri Ram also informed that the prosecution should have submitted a witness statement to the defence on Jan 6, but could only do so today.

Upon hearing the prosecution's request, the court freed Rizal and ordered him out of the dock.

However, during the proceeding, lawyer Datuk Jagjit Singh who is representing Rosmah, 68, had asked the court to extend the scheduled trial date on Feb 3 as the prosecution had withdrawn the charges against Rizal.

"We are shocked at this directive and need to set out all defence strategies and examine witness statements.

"Accordingly, the defence applied for the court to extend the trial dates set for February and March," he added.

However, the court dismissed the application and maintained Feb 3 for the trial to begin.

Earlier, there was a commotion when Rosmah tried to approach an individual in the public gallery, but was prevented from doing so by her lawyer and daughter.

When asked by the media later on the audio recording disclosed by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), Rosmah replied: "The matter will be dealt with by my lawyer."

On May 30 last year, Mohamed Zaini set 32 days for the solar power case trial involving Rosmah and Rizal.

The dates are Feb 3-6, Feb 10-13, Feb 17-20, March 9-12, April 6-9, April 13-16, April 20-23, and April 27-30.

According to the charge sheets, Rosmah allegedly received bribes amounting to RM5 million from Jepak Holdings Sdn Bhd managing director Saidi Abang Samsudin, 60, through Rizal.

The money was an inducement for Rosmah to assist the company in securing the Integrated Hybrid Photovoltaic (PV) Solar System and Gense / Diesel Operations for 369 Sarawak rural schools worth RM1.25 billion, in direct consultation with the Ministry of Education.

Rosmah was charged with committing the act at Kediaman Seri Perdana, Persiaran Seri Perdana, Precint 10, Putrajaya, on Dec 20, 2016.

The charge framed under Section 16 (a) (A) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009 is punishable under Section 24 (1) of the same act, which provides for a maximum jail term of 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the sum or value of the gratification, or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

On Nov 15, 2018, Rosmah was charged with two counts of soliciting RM187.5 million and receiving RM1.5 million in connection with the solar power supply and installation projects for 369 Sarawak rural schools.

6. 'Cabinet only had an inkling about two additional short term loans given to SRC International'



Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak acknowledged in the High Court today that his Cabinet only "had an inkling" that the company needed extra money to the tune of RM600 million, to service its debt or risk going into default mode.

KUALA LUMPUR: The Cabinet was kept in the dark over two additional short-term loans granted to SRC International Bhd when the company almost defaulted on repaying RM4 billion loan it obtained from the Retirement Fund Incorporated (KWAP) in 2011 and 2012.

Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak acknowledged in the High Court today that his Cabinet only "had an inkling" that the company needed extra money to the tune of RM600 million, to service its debt or risk going into default mode.

The RM4 billion debt has since snowballed to RM9.3 billion, the court heard, but Najib said he needed to verify the figures.

Najib, however, denied that SRC International's troubled finances were kept as a secret from his ministers.

"They had an inkling but they were not told about the second and third additional loans as it was under my purview," he said, when pushed by lead prosecutor Datuk V Sithambaram.

Najib said he also couldn't remember if the two government guarantees issued for SRC International to secure the RM4 billion loan had been tabled in parliament.

"I don't remember...I can't recall if it was done or not but I can check," he said, pledging to return with an answer at the next hearing.

Najib, 66, is facing seven criminal breach of trust, abuse of power and money laundering charges involving RM42 million of SRC International funds.

He faces 20 years' jail and fine, if convicted.

Today's hearing saw Najib being questioned again on his credit card spending during his Italian holiday in September 2014 when he spent about RM3.2 million buying various items, including a piece of jewellery for the wife of Qatari prime minister, Sheikh Hamad Jassim Jaber Mohammed Al Thani.

Najib said it was not he who bought the jewellery but his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

"She picked it...I just paid for it," he said to Sithambaram's amusement who replied by saying:

"But of course, it is best to leave these kind of things to women...only they know what other women want."

Sithambaram then proceeded to question Najib about a purported letter from the Qatari side acknowledging the gift.

He asked the former Finance Minister whether the defence planned to call anyone to testify to confirm that the jewellery had indeed been given to the Qatar prime minister's wife.

Najib replied that his lawyers were looking into it.

The senior criminal lawyer then suggested that there was no such gift given to anyone but Najib disagreed.

Sithambaram also questioned Najib about additional spending for hotel stays in Bali, Bangkok, Rome and purchases from upmarket stores like the House of Bijan in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, and other stores in New York.

Najib explained that his spending on such items "was not that significant" compared to the amount he spent on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes using money from the Arab donation which he received.

The former Umno president has all this while maintained that he received RM2.6 billion donation from the late Saudi Ruler, King Abdullah Abdul Aziz Al Saud.

Najib was also questioned on fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low's role in ensuring there was enough money in his bank accounts to prevent cheques issued from bouncing.

He was referred to Blackberry meseenger chats between Jho Low and Najib's personal banking relationship manager Joanna Yu where it was clear the Penang-born businessman discussed on

moving funds into the Pekan member of parliament's accounts to ensure there were sufficient funds whenever cheques were issued.

Asked if the chats proved that Jho Low was playing a big role in ensuring that he had enough money in his accounts, Najib replied: "It would appear so."

Najib also acknowledged that he had liased with Jho Low on a few occasions concerning his AmBank accounts.

"However, it was on very few occasions," he said.

7. 'After audio expose, which world leader would want to speak to our PM?'



The Sembrong MP and former Umno vice president said that international leaders may now think twice about having a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

MEMBAKUT: The move by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to expose recorded phone conversations of former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak may affect Malaysia's bilateral ties with other countries, said Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein.

The Sembrong MP and former Umno vice president said that international leaders may now think twice about having a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Which international leader will now talk to our Prime Minister, you tell me? Because (they fear) they would be at risk of being tapped.

"So, for anybody who wants to speak to our Prime Minister, they would have to meet (him) face to face. (If Dr Mahathir) wants to speak to Trump, (he) may have to go to America," he told reporters after a Barisan Nasional (BN) ceramah here, last night.

Hishammuddin, who is the former Home and Defence Minister, was responding to a question on whether the MACC's audio expose would affect BN's chances of winning the Kimanis parliamentary by-election.

He said the Pakatan Harapan government and the MACC must reflect on the move to play the recordings publically, as it could impact the integrity of the government agency, among others.

"Let that go through a court process. I do (question) the legality of it... in the context of the court cases still going on.

"They have to seriously think, because it affects the integrity of the *MACC*, the credibility of our court system and judiciary, as well as bilateral diplomacy at the international level," he added.

8. 'Recordings won't affect Najib's cases'

KUALA LUMPUR: The release of audio recordings involving shocking conversations regarding the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandal has raised many questions, not least on whether it will have any impact on the criminal charges faced by former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Legal experts believe that while the release of the audio files by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) was unusual, it would not amount to a dismissal of Najib's cases.

Prominent lawyer Mohamed Haniff Khatri Abdulla said while he disagreed with the way the recordings were released, he was confident that the exposé would not stop the proceedings from continuing.

"There are other ingredients of the (alleged) crimes and questions yet to be answered by Najib.

"(His cases) would not necessarily be dismissed, but the recordings may create complications," he told the *New Straits Times*.

Last Wednesday, the MACC released nine audio recordings said to incriminate former top officials, including Najib and his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

MACC Chief Commissioner Latheefa Koya, describing the contents as indicative of "a criminal conspiracy at the highest level", said they were made public so that there would not be any attempt to undermine independent bodies.



Mohamed Haniff Khatri Abdulla.

She said the conversations pointed to "serious power abuse, criminal conspiracy, obstruction of justice and compromise of national security".

Latheefa said the agency had received the recordings from an anonymous source and decided to make them public after verifying their authenticity as the issues involved were of public interest.

To this point, Haniff questioned if Latheefa had sought advice from the agency's legal officers and the Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC) before releasing the recordings.

"She was correct when she said she didn't inform the prime minister, as such an action would be against the rule of law.

"All she needs to do is consult MACC's legal officers, who come from the A-GC and get confirmation from the A-GC before releasing the clips.

"But to me, it is not right for MACC to do this.

"They should have finished their investigations and passed them to the A-G for relevant parties to be charged."

He said allowing the public to listen and make their own assumptions was improper as they may interfere with the trial.

Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas, a former lawyer and former member of the MACC Advisory Board, dismissed speculation that the release of the recordings was sub judice or that it could not be used as evidence in court.

"Even if (the recordings) were illegally done, they can still be used as evidence in court. In this case, although it may be improper, it is legal and it can be used as evidence."

Najib, 66, pleaded not guilty to 25 charges of graft and money laundering relating to transactions amounting to RM2.3 billion linked to the strategic development company.

He also claimed trial to 21 charges under the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing Act 2001.

In November, he was ordered to enter his defence on seven counts of abusing his position for gratification, criminal breach of trust and money laundering involving RM42 million of SRC International Sdn Bhd, a former subsidiary of 1MDB funds.

The release has led to several people calling for the introduction of a Privacy Act to safeguard the privacy of individuals.

This came about following the understanding that Section 116C of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) allows a public prosecutor to authorise the police to intercept any conversation if he considers that it is likely to contain information relating to the commission of an offence.



Tan Sri Megat Najmuddin Megat Khas.

The MACC Act 2009 also provides for its officers with the rank of commissioner or above to intercept any conversation for investigating offences under this act.

Last year, legal expert Prof Datuk Salleh Buang had called for the Privacy Act to be tabled in Parliament, providing for deterrent penalties for the invasion of privacy.

Salleh, who had served in the A-GC, said this was because public awareness of privacy in Malaysia was low, and the problem was aggravated by the absence of legislation.

However, lawyer Khaliq Mehtab Mohd Ishaq said such an act would affect Section 116C of the CPC, and believed that a Privacy Act would allow crimes to "go under the radar".

"It (the act) will protect the people and office bearers, but it also means that some crimes might just slip from the authorities.

"I would not champion the Privacy Act because it may be misused by certain people.

"To me, if you are a law-abiding citizen, you don't need a Privacy Act because you would not be worried about your phone being tapped."

9. Jho Low's name was taken out from minutes of 1MDB meeting, court hears



Former 1MDB CEO Arul Kanda Kandasamy at the KL High Court today.

KUALA LUMPUR: A former director of the National Audit Department (NAD) today revealed how all mention of fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low was erased from the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) final audit report.

Saadatul Nafisah Bashir Ahmad said in court that this was done on the instructions of Tan Sri Shukry Mohd Salleh, who was then the chief private secretary to former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

She said auditors had queried about Jho Low's presence in one of the 1MDB board of directors' meeting where crucial decisions on the company's investment in PetroSaudi Ltd were made on Sept 26, 2009.

"Shukry wanted a paragraph on Jho Low attending the board meeting to be dropped. He gave the excuse that it was a sensitive issue which could be manipulated by the Opposition.

"He argued that dropping the paragraph will not affect the overall audit report," she said, adding that Shukry had then contended there were no supporting documents to show Jho Low actually attended the meeting.

Rebutting Shukry's statement, Saadatul said auditors had actually gone through minutes of the 1MDB meeting previously and Jho Low's attendance at the meeting was mentioned.

"However, we were not allowed to make photocopies of the minutes then.

"Eventually, when the same minutes were finally given to us, Jho Low's name was nowhere to be found," she said.

The retired former top officer of the NAD was testifying in the 1MDB audit tampering trial involving Najib and former 1MDB chief executive Arul Kanda Kandasamy.

Arul Kanda is accused of abetting Najib in the offence, which carries a maximum of 20 years jail.

Saadatul, who is the seventh prosecution witness also testified that former Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Ali Hamsa had instructed NAD not to print the 1MDB final audit report until Najib approved it.

She said Ali told her this when she went to his office to submit a copy of the report on Feb 29, 2016.

"He said don't print the report until his greenlight," she said, adding Ali told her the report would have a political impact on the country.

The trial before High Court Judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan continues.

10. Foundation director charged with fund misappropriation, CBT worth RM178,000



Knowledge Management Foundation director Datuk Abdul Rahman Mohamed Shariff was charged today with misappropriating funds amounting to over RM28,000 to purchase cigars for himself and a stove for his wife, two years ago

KUALA LUMPUR: Knowledge Management Foundation director Datuk Abdul Rahman Mohamed Shariff was charged today with misappropriating funds amounting to over RM28,000 to purchase cigars for himself and a stove for his wife, two years ago.

Abdul Rahman, who was clad in a grey blazer, was also charged by the Sessions Court here with misappropriating RM150,000 from the foundation by transferring the funds to the account of his company, Mudra Resources Sdn Bhd, on Nov 22, 2018.

The accused, who is also Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS) chairman, had also allegedly committed criminal breach of trust (CBT) when he purchased a Rational Combi Oven and Ultravent Plus Exhaust Hood worth over RM25,000 using the foundation's monies for his wife's company, Coffee Sandwich Reivial Sdn Bhd, on Dec 13, 2018.

He is also alleged to have purchased a box of Montecristo Edmundo and Romeo y Julieta Wide Churchill cigars worth RM3,049 using the foundation's funds on Dec 13, 2018.

Abdul Rahman, who appeared calm, pleaded not guilty when the charges were read to him before judge Azura Alwi.

Deputy public prosecutor Farah Yasmin Salleh asked the court to set bail at RM120,000 and for the accused to surrender his passport to the court.

However, counsel Datuk Salehuddin Saidin, representing Abdul Rahman, pleaded for minimum bail.

He also objected to the request to surrender Abdul Rahman's passport, as his client is required to travel frequently, especially considering he has a business in the United Kingdom.

The court set bail at RM100,000 in one surety, and ordered the accused to report to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's (MACC) office once a month.

11. Mention of 1MDB bond cases against Goldman Sachs entity set on Feb 5



February 5 have been set for mention of the government's RM27.2 billion (US\$6.5 billion) 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) bond cases against Goldman Sachs (Singapore)

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court here today set Feb 5 for mention of the government's RM27.2 billion (US\$6.5 billion) 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) bond cases against Goldman Sachs (Singapore) Pte.

Judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan fixed the date after Deputy Public Prosecutor Zaki Asyraf Zubir informed the court that the notice of summons had yet to be served on the company due to technical grounds.

"There was an old date on the summons (that was) issued to Goldman Sachs (Singapore). Due to that, Singapore Goldman Sachs refused to accept our summons served on them," he told the court, here today.

Following that, Mohamed Zaini set Feb 5 to as the new mention date.

Also present were lawyers Krishna Dallumah and Datuk Prem Ramachandran, representing Goldman Sachs (Singapore).

Meanwhile, at the Magistrate's Court before Magistrate Nur Farah Ain Roslan, Zaki Asyraf informed the court that the prosecution will issue a new notice of summons with the correct date.

Nur Farah also set Feb 5 for mention.

The High Court had previously fixed today to hear the prosecution's application to transfer the case involving Goldman Sachs (Singapore) from the Magistrate's Court to the High Court.

In December last year, Malaysia filed four charges against investment bank and financial services company Goldman Sachs at the Magistrate's Court here for allegedly leaving out material facts on the sale of bonds between a subsidiary of 1MDB and Aabar Investment PJS Ltd (Aabar).

The offences were allegedly committed at 1MDB's premises at Level 8, Menara IMC, No. 8, Jalan Sultan Ismail here, between March 19, 2012 and November 11, 2013.

The company was charged under Section 179 (c) of the Capital Markets and Services Act 2007, which carries a penalty of imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years and a fine of not less than RM1 million, upon conviction.

Former Goldman Sachs banker Roger Ng Chong Hwa has also claimed trial to four counts of abetting the company, in reference to the sale of the same bonds by omitting material facts and making false statements.

The United States Department of Justice has estimated that about US\$4.5 billion was misappropriated from 1MDB between 2009 and 2014.

12. Arul Kanda likely to end up as a prosecution witness



Former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) chief executive Arul Kanda Kandasamy's lawyers will not bother cross-examining any witness called to testify in the sovereign wealth fund audit tampering trial.

KUALA LUMPUR: Former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) chief executive Arul Kanda Kandasamy's lawyers will not bother cross-examining any witness called to testify in the sovereign wealth fund audit tampering trial.

His lawyer Datuk N Sivananthan informed High Court Judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan that Arul Kanda was very likely to end up as a prosecution witness and therefore he did not want to compromise on his client's position.

Sivananthan said the prosecution had right from the onset of the trial made it clear that Arul Kanda will be called as a witness.

"I am therefore not going to cross-examine any witness at this stage.

"However, if my client is not called as a prosecution witness then we reserve the right to recall the witnesses to be cross-examined," he said.

Sivananthan, who is leading Arul Kanda's defence team along with Jasmine Cheong and Dhanyaa Shreeya Sukumar, said this immediately after lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram finished his examination-in-chief of seventh prosecution witness, retired National Audit Department director Saadatul Nafisah Bashir Ahmad.

Earlier, the 65-year old was asked to listen to an audio recording of a meeting which took place at former chief secretary to the government Tan Sri Ali Hamsa's office on Feb 24, 2016.

It was at this meeting discussions and instructions to modify the 1MDB audit report were held before the final audit report was prepared and presented to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

In one part of the meeting Ali can be heard saying "we must take care of our leadership".

Asked what he meant by that, Saadatul, who was present in the meeting, said Ali was talking about the then prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

She also testified that if not for the Feb 24 meeting, the original 1MDB audit report would not have been altered.

Among those who attended the meeting were Ali, former Auditor General Tan Sri Ambrin Buang, former principal chief secretary to Najib, Tan Sri Shukry Mohd Salleh, then Attorney General's Chambers officer Tan Sri Dzulkifly Ahmad and also Arul Kanda.

Najib is accused of tampering with the 1MDB audit report while Arul Kanda is accused of abetting him in doing so.

13. 'Arul Kanda a very intelligent man who promised the moon but gave little'



Former NAD director Saadatul Nafisah Bashir Ahmad (left)

KUALA LUMPUR: The National Audit Department (NAD) had a love-hate relationship with former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) chief executive Arul Kanda Kandasamy, the High Court heard today.

Much to the amusement of everyone, including the accused himself, Arul Kanda was praised and criticised in the same sentence by a prosecution witness in the 1MDB audit tampering trial.

This happened when former NAD director Saadatul Nafisah Bashir Ahmad was cross examined by lawyer Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who is representing Datuk Seri Najib Razak in the case.

The senior counsel was having a field day grilling Saadatul Nafisah on how the NAD went about preparing the final 1MDB audit report before it was presented to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in 2016, when the topic of Arul Kanda's involvement cropped up.

Shafee asked the seventh prosecution witness whether she knew when Arul Kanda joined 1MDB and she acknowledged that the 43-year old was roped in to work with the sovereign wealth fund on January 5, 2015.

He then maneuvered his questions to suggest that Arul Kanda was therefore quite new in 1MDB when the audit report was being prepared and this was the reason the latter could not provide much of the information requested by auditors.

However, Saadatul Nafisah's reply caught everyone by surprise when she started singing praises of the former Head of Investment Banking at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank before being head hunted to work for the troubled wealth fund.

"No, no...Arul Kanda is a very intelligent man. He learns everything very fast," she said, while immediately adding that Arul Kanda also promised many things but delivered very little.



The National Audit Department (NAD) had a love-hate relationship with former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) chief executive Arul Kanda Kandasamy, the High Court heard today.

"We asked for information but they (1MDB) took months to respond. The PAC kept pressuring us (to have the 1MDB audit ready) and I went to see Arul Kanda a few times."

Saadatul Nafisah then contradicted herself when she said Arul Kanda co-operated with the NAD department but the information auditors requested was never supplied to them.

Shafee immediately pounced on her answer and said: "You have just praised and condemned him in one sentence. First you said he is very good then you said he did nothing."

Saadatul Nafisah then clarified by saying: "He co-operated with us..he promised us..he was the 1MDB CEO then...we waited and waited for the information which he promised but it never came."

Shafee then asked her whether she knew that 1MDB was unlike other companies at that time as it was tangled in "conspiracies within conspiracies".

Shafee: Do you know this?

Saadatul Nafisah: Not at that time.

Shafee: You know of Jho Low (fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho).

Saadatul Nafisah: Yes.

Shafee: You know he played a big role in all this?

Saadatul Nafisah: Now I know. But he (Arul Kanda) should have informed us instead of making us wait for months.

Earlier, Shafee also asked the 65-year old if she knew what had caused the acrimonious relationship between the NAD and 1MDB.

Saadatul Nafisah said she was unaware of such a thing and Shafee pointed out that it was caused by Arul Kanda's predecessor, Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi.

"It was he who obstructed attempts to audit 1MDB before Arul Kanda came in.

"He was such a hindrance that it led to the acrimonious relationship between NAD and 1MDB," he said.

Shafee also managed to get Saadatul Nafisah - who led a special team to audit 1MDB in 2015, to agree that a report which has become subject of the ongoing trial was not the final copy and could be amended.

She agreed that it was only an interim draft copy and the NAD had the liberty of amending it without compromising their position.

Saadatul Nafisah also agreed that former chief secretary to the government Tan Sri Ali Hamsa did not force or directly ask auditors to drop certain things from the final report.

"It was said in a good way...of course he did not directly say such things," she said of a meeting where Ali allegedly directed the 1MDB audit report to be modified with in paragraphs to be dropped from the final copy.

Asked why the final 1MDB audited report eventually ended up being classified under the Official Secrets Act (OSA) before it was tabled to the PAC, Saadatul Nafisah said it was done on the advise of the authorities after the first draft copy was leaked immediately after it was presented to the PAC.

The trial before judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan will continue at a yet to be fixed date.

Najib and his co-accused, Arul Kanda, are on trial for tampering with the 1MDB final audit report. They face up to 20-years jail and fine if convicted.

Earlier, at the onset of today's hearing Shafee applied and succeeded in getting the court to order the PAC to provide its notes of proceedings of former Auditor General Tan Sri Amrin Buang's testimony at the hearing in 2016.

Ambrin had previously testified for the prosecution in the audit tampering trial and he may be recalled for further cross examination later.

14. Najib files application to obtain audio recordings



Datuk Seri Najib Razak today filed a formal application to obtain the 'shocking' recording of conversations allegedly between him and his associates conspiring to cover up the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandal

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak today filed a formal application to obtain the 'shocking' recording of conversations allegedly between him and his associates conspiring to cover up the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandal.

Najib who filed the notice of motion on Wednesday at the High Court stated that the recordings, which were released by Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner Latheefa Koya were 'crucial evidence' for his defence in his on-going trials involving 1MDB and SRC International Sdn Bhd.

Najib, through his lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, wants the prosecution or the MACC to compile the complete audio recordings for their inspection.

The former premier in his affidavit in support said Latheefa had made a serious allegation against him during the Press conference concerning SRC International and 1MDB cases.

"Latheefa has identified one of the audio recordings to be a purported conversation between me and the crown prince of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohammed Zayed Al Nahyan.

"The purported conversation was in relation to the dispute between 1MDB and Abu Dhabi based International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC) which was scheduled for arbitration at the material time.

"I have been advised by my solicitor and I verily believe that the said audio recording is relevant to the proposed settlement between IPIC and 1MDB as was testified by the eight prosecution witness in the 1MDB case, Datuk Ahmari Effendi Nazaruddin," he said.

On Jan 8, the graft buster dropped a bombshell by releasing about 50 minutes of recorded conversations between several people allegedly including Najib and his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

Latheefa during the press conference described the contents as "shocking, sordid and very disturbing."

She said the recordings raised serious issues about obstruction of justice, compromising national security, and fabrication of false evidence.

The recordings took place between Jan 5 and July 29, 2016.

Najib, 66, is currently facing charges against him relating to SRC International before High Court judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali.

The Pekan member of parliament pleaded not guilty to 25 charges of graft and money laundering relating to transactions amounting to RM2.3 billion linked to the sovereign wealth fund.

He also claimed trial to 21 charges under the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing Act 2001.

In November last year, he was ordered to enter defence on seven counts of abusing his position for gratification, criminal breach of trust and money laundering involving RM42 million of SRC International Sdn Bhd (former subsidiary of 1MDB) funds.

15. BUTTERWORTH: The Penang National Unity and Integration director and his son were charged at the Sessions Court here today with graft involving RM45,472.

Mohd Saidi Midin, 59, and Mohd Al-Azhim Mohd Saidi, 28, both claimed trial when the charge was read to them separately before Judge Ahmad Azahari Abdul Hamid.

Saidi was alleged to have received inducement by using his position as the director of the department to award the Edu Kids System Services project worth RM45,472 to Thekiey Studio, a company owned by his son, at his office in George Town between March and December 2016.

He was charged under Section 23(1) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009, punishable under Section 24 of the same Act, which carries maximum 20 years imprisonment and fine of not less than five times the amount of the bribe received or RM10,000, whichever higher, upon conviction.

Meanwhile, Al-Aznim, an IT officer, was alleged to have abetted in the offence at the same time and place.

He was charged under Section 28(1)(c) of the same Act, read together with subsections 23(1) and 24(1) of the same Act.

If convicted, he is looking at maximum 20 years imprisonment and fine of not less than five times the amount of the bribe received or RM10,000, whichever higher.

Deputy Public Prosecutors S. Selvaranjini and Mohamad Azlan Basri prosecuted while the father and son duo were represented by Muhamad Asri Abdul Hamid.

Selvaranjini, who prosecuted against Saidi, urged the court to set bail at RM30,000 and asked that his passport be surrendered to the court.

"We also request for an additional condition for the accused to report himself to the MACC office every first week of the month if he has no passport," she told the court.

Azlan also asked that the same bail be imposed on Al-Aznim with the same condition.

Asri meanwhile asked for minimum fines for his clients, saying that they each has family to care for.

He also said that Saidi was receiving treatment for high blood pressure and diabetes.

"Also, both of my clients had fully cooperated with the graft busters since the very beginning," he said.

Ahmad Azahari then set bail at RM15,000 with one surety for each of the accused.

He also ordered Mohd Saidi to surrender his passport to the court and for Mohd Al-Aznim to report himself at the MACC office every first week of the month.

He also fixed Feb 25 for mention and document submission.



Mohd Saidi Midin (right) and his son, Mohd Al-Azhim Mohd Saidi (left) seen leaving the Butterworth Sessions Court

16. Shahrir, Ahmad Maslan charged with money laundering

KUALA LUMPUR: Two Umno leaders were charged at the Sessions Court today with money laundering after failing to declare to the Inland Revenue Board (IRB), monies purportedly received from the party's former president Datuk Seri Najib Razak, seven years ago.

Former deputy finance minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Maslan and former Felda chairman Tan Sri Shahrir Ab Samad pleaded not guilty to the charges read to them in two separate Sessions courts.

The duo who looked jovial when they arrived at the courts complex, here, about 8.10am and were greeted by Umno leaders and supporters.

The two party leaders arrived separately and were accompanied by several Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) officers before they were ushered into the different courtrooms.

Several Umno top brass including its president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi was also present during the legal proceedings to provide moral support.

Others present were party secretary general Tan Sri Annuar Musa, supreme council members Tan Sri Noh Omar, Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom, Datuk Lokman Noor Adam, and Youth chief Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki.

Facing charges before Sessions Court judge Azman Ahmad, Ahmad Maslan, 54, faces two counts.

On the first count, the Pontian member of parliament was accused of getting himself involved in money laundering by not declaring to the IRB the RM2 million he received from Najib via a cheque dated Nov 27, 2013, in his tax filing for the year.

The offence was allegedly committed at the Duta branch of the IRB located at the Government Complex in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Halim, here, on April 30, 2014.

He also faces another charge of giving false statement to the MACC when his statement was recorded under Section 32 of Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act (AMLATFPUAA) by the agency's investigating officer Mohd Zairi Zainal.

According to the charge sheet, among Ahmad's statements which was allegedly false was denying that he had received any money from Najib.

He allegedly committed the offence at a media conference room at the Parliament building in Jalan Parliament, here. Between 2.45pm and 3.30pm on July 4, last year.

Deputy public prosecutor Norzilati Izhani Zainal offered RM1 million bail to Ahmad saying that the charges faced by the accused were serious.

In pleading for minimum bail, Ahmad's counsel Hamadi Mohd Noh said his client who is a serving MP has no risk of absconding.

"He had also been cooperating throughout MACC's investigations and the fact that he had appeared in court today shows that he is a law abiding citizen," the lawyer said.

The court then allowed RM500,000 bail with one surety to the accused and ordered for the accused to surrender his passport to the court.

His case will come up for mention on Feb 21.

Meanwhile, before Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi, Shahrir who is Johor Baru Umno division chief was charged with failing to declare RM1 million he purportedly received from Najib on Nov 28, 2013.

Norzilati asked for the court to impose RM500,000 bail with one surety to the accused saying that the court should consider the severity of the offence and public interest.

However, counsel Syahrul Syazwan Salehin who represented Shahrir pleaded for minimum bail stating that his client has a low risk to absconding.

"He has withdrawn all of his retirement monies of about RM100,000 for his bail.

"My client is also a former politician and public figure," he said.

The court then set RM350,000 bail with one surety and asked the accused to surrender his passport to the court.

His case will come up for mention on Feb 24.

The Johor Umno leaders charge for money laundering was framed under Section 4(1)(a) of the AMLATFAPUAA carries fine of not more than RM5 million and maximum five years imprisonment.

On Jun 21 last year, the duo were among 41 people and entities named by the graft buster in their civil forfeiture suit to recover RM270 million allegedly received from 1 Malaysia Development Berhad which has been engulfed in a financial scandal.



Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (centre) shares a light moment with Johor Baru Umno division chief Tan Sri Shahrir Abd Samad (right) and Pontian MP Datuk Seri Ahmad Maslan at Kuala Lumpur Court Complex.

17. 'They did not have a game plan, their game kept changing'



Both sides in Datuk Seri Najib Razak's SRC International Bhd trial today continued to pitch their arguments on the need for a handwriting expert to verify the former prime minister's signatures on some contentious documents linked to the case.

KUALA LUMPUR: Both sides in Datuk Seri Najib Razak's SRC International Bhd trial today continued to pitch their arguments on the need for a handwriting expert to verify the former prime minister's signatures on some contentious documents linked to the case.

The prosecution accused the defence of having lost the plot, with lead prosecutor Datuk V Sithambaram saying that Najib had been making outrageous claims to cast doubts on the authenticity of his signatures.

"It is outrageous to say his signatures could have been forged on documents which are minutes of the SRC International shareholders meetings...that there was no such meetings for seven years.

"I am flabbergasted by the line they are taking," he said.

Sithambaram also countered the defence arguments that the prosecution had been unfair to them.

He said the actual fact was the defence had been unfair to themselves.

"They did not have a game plan...their game kept changing," he said.

Sithambaram said it was ridiculous that the defence wanted a handwriting expert to be called to tell Najib whether or not he signed the documents.

"I find this very amusing...normally an expert is called when you absolutely insist you did not sign something.

"However, here we have the accused saying he doesn't know if he signed it and wants someone else to tell him whether he did," the senior lawyer said.

Meanwhile, Najib's lawyers argued they should be allowed to do everything possible to fight their case.

His lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah pleaded that his client had every right to call the handwriting expert even if there were accusations that this was just an afterthought.

He said not allowing the expert witness to testify could end up being prejudicial to the defence's case.

Shafee then went on to cite several previous cases to back his arguments before reminding the court of an often quoted phrase that "it is better to let go one guilty man than to hang one innocent one."

"It does not matter what kind of defence an accused is raising, the court should consider the slightest for the benefit of doubt," he said.

Najib, 66, is accused of abusing his position as prime minister and misappropriating RM42 million of SRC International funds.

Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali will decide tomorrow if Najib's application to call the handwriting expert should be allowed.

18. DPP to Najib: 'Would you have loaned SRC International your own money?'



Datuk Seri Najib Razak was today forced to answer some awkward questions on the performance of SRC International Bhd.

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak was today forced to answer some awkward questions on the performance of SRC International Bhd after the company obtained RM4 billion loan which was guaranteed by the government.

Lead prosecutor Datuk V Sithambaram had the former prime minister against the ropes when he asked the latter if he would have given his own money to the RM2 company, which has since not only failed to service its debt but also had nothing to show for.

Najib kept disagreeing with all such suggestions put forward by the Deputy Public Prosecutor during the cross-examination and maintained that others - including the company board of directors and officials in a unit within the Finance Ministry Inc - should have kept track of SRC International's performance.

"The onus was on them to report to me," he said.

Sithambaram touched on the RM4 billion loan which SRC International obtained from the Retirement Fund Inc (KWAP) by asking the accused, who is also the former Finance Minister, if he had ever been informed of the company's achievements after it got its hands on the first RM2 billion.

To this Najib said he was initially informed that the company was making some good progress in its efforts to source for alternate energy sources, especially coal.

Sithambaram: But you were never told of the actual good progress of the company

Najib: Correct

Sithambaram: Did you make any attempt to meet SRC International's board of directors in view of the huge sum of money that had been given to the company?

Najib: I had trust in them.

Sithambaram: But they failed for seven years.

Najib: The unit in the Finance Ministry Inc should have been alerted.

Sithambaram: You took absolutely no interest in SRC International even though it had nothing to show after taking the first loan, and then the second loan and onwards until you left office.

Najib: I was concerned..that is why I replaced the chief executive (Nik Faisal Ariff Kamil) of the company

Sithambaram: You removed him as CEO but appointed him into the board of the same company. You kept him because he was actually the conduit to transfer money into your accounts.

Najib: I totally disagree.

Sithambaram then asked Najib if he ever heard the numerous alarm bells that were ringing at that time when it emerged that SRC International had taken all the money out of the country.

However, Najib responded by saying: "I thought they had invested..I cannot remember if it rang alarm bells."

The senior criminal lawyer then went on to question Najib about the second government guarantee which had been given to back SRC International's second loan even before the company applied for it.

Najib initially disagreed with the suggestion but eventually said he was not sure about it.

Sithambaram then chided Najib that the second loan looked more like a scam than an investment but the 66-year old disagreed.

However, this did not stop Sithambaram from going on to say that SRC International's only achievement had been to park all the money it got in Switzerland.

Najib maintained that he trusted SRC International board because it comprised of highly qualified individuals.

The trial before High Court Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali continues.

The SRC International trial involves Najib being accused of abusing his position as prime minister by giving government guarantees to SRC International to obtain RM4 billion loan from KWAP.

He also faces three criminal breach of trust and three money laundering charges involving RM42 million of SRC International funds.

19. Court allows Najib to call handwriting expert to verify signatures



This Jan 21 pic shows Datuk Seri Najib Razak leaving the court in Kuala Lumpur.

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak has succeeded in his bid to get an Australian handwriting expert to verify his signatures on several contentious documents tendered as evidence in the SRC International Bhd trial.

High Court Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali ruled that Najib's application should be allowed in the interest of justice and a fair trial.

He said Najib was entitled to introduce relevant evidence even if it is based on an afterthought.

"It is the duty of this court to uphold the constitutional right of the accused at all times," he said.

Nazlan also ruled that the prosecution will be allowed to call a rebuttal witness as provided under Section 425 of the Criminal Procedure Code if they wish to do so.

Mohd Nazlan ordered the defence to arrange for the expert to examine the documents within two days before Feb 3.

Najib, 66, is facing seven charges of misappropriating RM42 million of SRC International money. The company is a former subsidiary of 1Malaysia Development Bhd.

He faces up to 20-years jail if convicted of the offences.

20. Former AG appointed into Tabung Haji board the day he absolved Najib of any wrongdoing



Former Attorney General (AG) Tan Sri Apandi Ali's decision to clear Datuk Seri Najib Razak of any wrongdoing over the SRC International Bhd and 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandals was raised in the High Court here today.

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Attorney General (AG) Tan Sri Apandi Ali's decision to clear Datuk Seri Najib Razak of any wrongdoing over the SRC International Bhd and 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandals was raised in the High Court here today.

Najib was questioned about the decision and also asked if he had appointed Apandi into the Tabung Haji board the same day the latter absolved him of all charges.

Lead prosecutor Datuk V Sithambaram broached the subject at the closing stage of his cross-examination and started by asking Najib about Apandi's press conference on Jan 26, 2016.

Sithambaram: At this press conference Apandi absolved you of any wrongdoing. On the same day he was appointed into the Tabung Haji board. Isn't that true?

Najib: I am not sure of the exact date

Sithambaram: Under the Tabung Haji Act 1995, it is not compulsory for the AG to be a member of the Tabung Haji board, correct?

Najib: Probably not...I can't remember.

Sithambaram then asked Najib if evidence which had been adduced in the course of the ongoing trial showed that Apandi's decision to absolve him was clearly wrong.

Najib disagreed with the suggestion and rebutted the Deputy Public Prosecutor's argument that Apandi's appointment into the Tabung Haji board was done in bad faith.

It was previously reported that Apandi had cleared Najib of any wrongdoing in the 1MDB and SRC International scandals during a press conference.

It was later revealed that Apandi had been appointed into the Tabung Haji board. However, he quit the board in June 2018 after the Pakatan Harapan government took over.

Asked if he planned to call Apandi as one of the defence witness, Najib said his lawyers were still considering the matter.

Earlier in the proceedings today, Najib was also put through the grinder on the RM42 million of SRC International money which ended up in his private accounts.

Najib insisted he was not aware that money he spent actually originated from SRC International, a former 1MDB linked company.

He insisted that he would never have condoned it if he knew money from the company was being channeled to his account.

Asked why anyone would want to put millions into his account without his knowledge, Najib said he did not know.

Sithambaram then pointed out to Najib that the transaction history of his bank accounts showed that funds came in periodically whenever he needed to write cheques.

The 66-year-old however maintained that he never knew it was from SRC International and always thought it was leftover money from the Arab donation he received.

The Pekan member of parliament insisted that he had always imagined the money to be part of the RM2.6 billion Arab donation which he received from the late King Abdullah Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia between 2011 and 2014.

However, when asked if he knew the so-called donation money which he received and later returned could all be traced to fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low's companies, Najib maintained he did not know and neither bothered to check such details.

Najib nevertheless agreed that he relied on Jho Low to deal with the Saudi Royals as the Penang-born businessman was a conduit between both parties.

Najib: He was nominated by the Saudi Royal family

Sithambaram: What do you mean he was nominated...Did the King call both of you into a room and introduced Jho Low as his nominee?

Najib: I just know that for a fact.

Sithambaram then suggested that Najib had known all along that the money which he received never came from the Arabs.

However, the accused denied this and said some of the money had come directly from the Saudi Ministry of Finance.

Sithambaram: Unfortunately no member of the Saudi royal family will come to court and confirm this, correct?

Najib: Well, it is difficult to get them to come to court

Sithambaram: It is also very convenient for you not to call them to maintain your line of story.

Najib: I disagree.

The trial before High Court judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali will continue on Feb 3.

Najib is facing seven charges of abuse of power, criminal breach of trust and money laundering involving RM42 million of SRC International funds.

21. Ex-AmBank officer wants to strike out Najib's suit



Former AmBank relationship manager Joanna Yu Ging Ping is seeking to strike out a suit filed against her and the bank by Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

KUALA LUMPUR: Former AmBank relationship manager Joanna Yu Ging Ping is seeking to strike out a suit filed against her and the bank by Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

The suit filed by the former prime minister was in relation with alleged mismanagement of his bank accounts which were being scrutinised in the ongoing SRC International Sdn Bhd corruption trial.

Counsel Muhammad Farhan Shafee said Najib's legal representatives were just served with the application to strike out the writ of summons and statement of claim yesterday (Tuesday).

He said Yu filed the application on grounds that it was an abuse of the court process and to bolster Najib's defence in the SRC International case.

"Yu had also filed a certificate of urgency for case management to be held today (Wednesday). We will be responding to the striking out application as she needs to explain her action thoroughly," he said.

He said further case management is fixed on Feb 4 before High Court judge Datuk Khadijah Idris.

Counsel Jessica Ram Binwani acted for Yu.

Najib filed the suit on Dec 9, last year naming Ambank Islamic Bhd, AMMB Holdings Bhd and Yu who was a prosecution witness in the SRC International trial as defendants.

In his statement of claim, he said AmBank and Yu had committed negligence when handling his bank accounts (ending 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 balances of funds of account 694 to Low as the third party.

He claimed that the defendants did not engage with him to report on Low's action regarding the said 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 also 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).

He said the defendants failed to report and get direct instructions from him despite the accounts being red flagged.

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

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

Najib, 66, is facing charges of criminal breach of trust, abuse of power and money laundering involving RM42 million of SRC International funds.

22. Ex-minister to contest MACC forfeiture suit again

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Land Cooperative Development minister Tan Sri Kasitah Gaddam will file a second representation to the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC) against the government's forfeiture suit against him for allegedly receiving RM100,000 linked to the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

The funds were frozen by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for having links to the sovereign wealth funds.

His counsel Sasila Basri said they are submitting another representation to the AGC following the rejection of the first one yesterday.

"Yesterday evening we received a decision that the representation was rejected. After discussing with my client, he said he wanted to submit a second representation letter as soon as possible to the prosecution," she said.

Meanwhile, MACC deputy public prosecutor Nik Haslinie Hashim told the court that the prosecution is ready for trial.

She said cause papers and written submissions have been filed to the court accordingly.

The trial was then tentatively set for March 3 by High Court judge Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh.

Last year, MACC chief commissioner Latheefa Koya announced that the agency had filed civil forfeiture suits against 41 respondents to recover some RM270 million of funds linked to 1MDB.

She said the move was carried out in accordance with the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001, where the commission believed that the monies were transferred to the 41 people and entities from former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's bank account.



The funds were frozen by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for having links to the sovereign wealth funds.