

CONTENT OF DAILY NEWS OCTOBER 2020

BIL.	DATE	NEWS	PAGES
1.	02.10.2020	Procurement Graft critical	2
2.	02.10.2020	Govt fails to delay Jakel court ruling	3
3.	02.10.2020	Zuki, MACC to discuss govt procurement leakage problem	4
4.	06.10.2020	Ex-spy chief trial : Decision today on testimonies in camera-national Security	5
5.	06.10.2020	Three policemen claim trial to two counts of bribery	5
6.	07.10.2020	Govt funds used loan luxury watches	6
7.	07.10.2020	MACC on a witch hunt against Rosmah, says lawyer	6
8.	07.10.2020	Ex-senior ministry man held over graft for tender	7
9.	09.10.2020	MACC : Mara Inc suspect likely in Sabah – Aussie property purchase scandal	8
10.	09.10.2020	Private Cyberjaya Apartment used to cache documents-Ex-spy agency chief CBT trial	9
11.	09.10.2020	Vietnamese 'Datuk' bribe-to-be granted stay of jail term (convicted in bribery case)	9
12.	10.10.2020	Socso: 30 false claims under wage subsidy programme detected	10
13.	13.10.2020	Zahid aware Yayasanan cheques used	11
14.	13.10.2020	Duo plead hot guilty to four graft charges	11
15.	16.10.2020	Mat Sabu's ex-aide claims trial to graft charges-RM6.3 million in bribes	12
16.	23.10.2020	Director acquitted of extorting from Sunway chairman	13
17.	24.10.2020	Mat Sabu's ex-aide charged with bribery again	14
18.	24.10.2020	Former assistant engineer gets jail, fine for corruption	15
19.	24.10.2020	Goldman's image in Tatters again-1MDB plunder	16
20.	29.10.2020	Ex-intel chief charged with graft	17
21.	29.10.2020	Singaporean fined, jailed for offering RM100 bribe	17
22.	31.10.2020	Ex MACC officer fined for extorting policemen (RM10,000 fine)	18

New Straits Times Paper | 2 Oktober 2020 | Page: 8



Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali (centre) showing items related to public awareness of corruption at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Complex in Kuala Terengganu yesterday. With him is MACC Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki (left). BERHAMA PIC

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

'PROCUREMENT GRAFT CRITICAL'

MACC chief commissioner says 50pc of probes involved such cases

PUTRAJAYA

CORRUPTION cases resulting in leakage of government procurement involving civil servants are seen to be increasingly critical, said Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki.

Without revealing the statistics, he said there were several cases of leakage of government

procurement involving government agencies and 50 per cent of the MACC's investigation work involved such cases.

"I can say that, based on the MACC analysis, such wastages are common in the public sector, where they (the top leadership of government agencies), who are in power in deciding a matter (government procurement), are involved in misappropriation and abuse of power.

"When there is a leakage of gov-

ernment procurement, our investigation shows that there is an element of corruption that causes a certain value of government procurement to rise," he said at MACC's 53rd anniversary yesterday.

For example, Azam said if a government procurement was worth RM1 million, then the value of corruption would also increase.

"Not only that, it also affects the quality of the project. The latest case involving a road upgrade project in Sarawak, where the quality of the project has been reduced to the point that it is prone to damage, has caused millions of ringgit in losses to the government."

Azam said MACC needed to work with the Public Works Department and consult experts on the matter.

Last month, Bernama reported that MACC arrested two directors of a company with the title of Datuk on suspicion of corruption and submitting false claims worth millions of ringgit in connection with the implementation of 10 road upgrading projects in Sarawak worth RM800 million.

Asked whether such cases occurred in the private sector, Azam said MACC had received reports involving the private sector, but

the number was not as worrying as in the public sector.

"MACC (will) investigate both parties (public and private sectors) if it involves government procurement and to bring them to court."

Meanwhile, commenting on efforts to turn Malaysia into a corruption-free country, Azam said it demanded that MACC be mature in all its actions involving enforcement, prevention and community education in combating corruption.

"At present, as we are living with the new norms in the face of Covid-19, the situation poses challenges to MACC in its struggle to create a corruption-free society."

"Before Covid-19, MACC went out into the field to give briefings and conduct campaigns against corruption to the community. But since Covid-19, it uses mostly video and social media to interact with the community."

Azam also said MACC included elements of anti-corruption education in the textbook of Year Five students, which will come into effect next year.

"Apart from preventive measures, MACC also focuses on educating society in improving the integrity of individuals," he added. **Bernama**

'NO MERIT'

GOVT FAILS TO DELAY JAKEL COURT RULING

High Court had dismissed suit to forfeit RM628,314 seized from firm

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THE government yesterday failed in its bid to postpone a High Court ruling in dismissing its suit to forfeit RM628,314 seized from textile wholesaler Jakel

Trading Sdn Bhd.

The money, which was seized by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), was said to be from former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who was involved in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd scandal.

In his decision, judge Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh said there was no merit in the prosecution's application, which was made under Section 311 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

He said the prosecution was applying for a stay of the ruling despite Section 311 being exclusively meant for any judgment, conviction or sentence, and not on the effect of the court's decision.

"The prosecution had applied for a stay of ruling under Section 311, but in the court's decision on June 9, no term was set to justify the stay of the ruling.

"In its application, the prosecution had also sought the stay as the effect of the court's decision would pave the way for the return of the money seized from the respondent," he said.

Jakel Trading was represented by counsel Habizan Habeeb Rahman and Thevini Nayagam, while MACC deputy public prosecutor Mahadi Abdul Jumaat prosecuted.



Lawyers Habizan Habeeb Rahman and Thevini Nayagam, representing Jakel Trading, arriving at the High Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY HAIRUL ANUAR RAHIM

On June 9, the court dismissed the prosecution's forfeiture suit after finding that Jakel Trading had sold and delivered the goods in the ordinary course of its business, and the payment of RM628,314 was made for the goods that it delivered.

The court had also, in its decision, found the absence of anything potentially suspicious in the purchase of the goods and subsequent transactions.

Therefore, it said Jakel Trading could not be faulted for the source of payments.

New Straits Times Paper | 2 Oktober 2020 | Page: 8

Zuki, MACC to discuss govt procurement leakage problem

KUALA TERENGGANU: Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali will convene a meeting with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) in regard to the allegation of leakage of government procurement involving civil servants.

He said the matter must be addressed immediately for fear that it would slow down the economic recovery process, especially now that the country was still facing the threats of Covid-19.

"So I will discuss with them on what we should do next or the preventive measures that we can take. I'm worried that our country will not be able to progress as rapidly as we planned," he said at the opening of the new Terengganu MACC Complex at Bandar Baru Bukit Besar, here yesterday.

Apart from that, Zuki said Malaysia received international recognition in handling Covid-19, including being ranked fourth among 184 countries in the Global Covid-19 Recovery Index up to August and fifth among 23 countries in the Toluna-Blackbox Index for Perception and Crisis Management.

He said the recognition proved the determination and commitment of civil servants in translating all government strategies, such as the Economic Recovery Plan and Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package.

"Efforts to revive and revitalise the country's economy require more precise and committed efforts from all civil servants.

"Immediate post-Covid-19 initiatives such as the implementation of high-impact projects and the distribution of aid to the people will certainly be hampered if there are issues of corruption among civil servants themselves."

MACC Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki, who also attended the event, said MACC had completed the investigation paper on the 2015 property scam in Melbourne, Australia involving a senior officer of Majlis Amanah Rakyat, who is also a former politician.

He said the prosecution of two or three individuals involved was expected to be done in the next two or three weeks.

"To me, this is a high-profile case," he said, adding that the MACC had also opened 27 investigation papers on corruption during the Sabah election last Saturday. **Bernama**

New Straits Times Paper | 6 Oktober 2020 | Page: 10

'NATIONAL SECURITY'

Ex-spy chief trial: Decision today on testimonies in camera

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court will decide today whether to allow the prosecution to call 11 witnesses to give evidence in-camera in the trial of former Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation director-general Datuk Hasanah Abdul Hamid.

Judicial commissioner Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh said he would make the ruling after hearing submissions from both parties yesterday.

Earlier, deputy public prosecutor Muhammad Iskandar Ahmad said the prosecution would be calling in 11 witnesses to testify in private as it involved national security matters.

He said the testimonies of the 11 would have a negative impact on the country's foreign relationship with other countries if the proceedings were held in open court. This, he said, was due to the nature of their employment in the "highly coveted agency" within the Prime Minister's Office.

"If the witnesses were to testify publicly, their identities would be disclosed and, subsequently, this will invite possible threats to their lives and they would have their jobs compromised."

Objecting to the application, Hasanah's counsel, Hamdan Hamzah, said the prosecution had not adduced sufficient evidence to show that the country's national security could be jeopardised by the testimonies put forward by the witnesses.

"In their affidavits, the prosecution contended the country's foreign relationship with other countries will be threatened if this trial is held in open court.

"We are of the view that there is no evidence that the testimonies will be manipulated as the evidence in the affidavits on the foreign relationship is a speculation."

Shahrir said the trial would commence today whether the application for in-camera hearing was dismissed or allowed.

On Oct 25 last year, Hasanah, who was the then director-general of the Research Division of the Prime Minister's Department, was alleged to have committed criminal breach of trust by misappropriating US\$12.1 million belonging to the government.

New Straits Times Paper | 6 Oktober 2020 | Page: 11

ALLOWED RM15,000 BAIL EACH

Three policemen claim trial to two counts of bribery

ALOR STAR: Three policemen — an inspector and two corporals — pleaded not guilty in the Sessions Court here yesterday to two counts of bribery last July.

Corporal Mohd Asyraf Mustafa, Inspector Mohamad Saidy Sakah, and Corporal Muhammad Noor Firdaus Zainal, all 33, made the plea after the charges against them were read out before judge

Murtazadi Amran.

On the first count, they were charged with intentionally obtaining themselves a sum of RM7,800 in cash from an individual whom they knew had connection with their official duties.

The offence was allegedly committed in front of the Titi Gajah KFC outlet, Kota Setar, near here

about 8.30pm on July 16.

The accused were also charged with intentionally obtaining themselves RM4,000 in cash from a person whom they knew had connection with their official duties.

They were alleged to have committed the offence in front of an eatery near Medan Selera Pampang here about 3.30pm

on Sept 7.

The charge was framed under Section 165 of the Penal Code, read together with Section 34 of the same law, which carries a maximum jail term of two years or fine, or both, upon conviction.

Deputy public prosecutor Tan Sew Ping from the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission

(MACC) appeared for the prosecution, while all the accused were represented by counsel Muhammad Farhan Ahmad Fadzil.

The trio were allowed bail of RM15,000 in one surety each and were ordered to report themselves at the nearest MACC office every month.

The case has been fixed for mention on Nov 2. **Bernama**

New Straits Times Paper | 7 Oktober 2020 | Page: 13

US\$12.1m OF GOVT FUNDS

'GOVT FUNDS USED ON LUXURY WATCHES'

Ex-spy chief had asked employees to get six of the luxury items, says DPP

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FORMER Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation (MEIO) director-general Datuk Hasanah Abdul Hamid used a portion of US\$12.1 million of government money she allegedly misappropriated to purchase six luxury watches.

This was revealed by the prosecution in their opening statement in Hasanah's criminal

breach of trust (CBT) trial involving US\$12.1 million in government funds.

Deputy public prosecutor Muhammad Iskandar Ahmad said the prosecution will prove that the accused had misappropriated the monies which she received when she was a public servant eight years ago.

"The prosecution will prove that these monies were entrusted to the accused in her capacity as director-general of the Research Division of the Prime Minister's Department, who was responsible for the finances of the department."

"We will prove that the monies were aimed for 'a specific purpose', but was not done by the accused."

"We also will prove that the accused never handed the monies to the government and asked her

employees to buy six luxury watches with a portion of the money instead," he said.

At least 37 prosecution witnesses will be called and the prosecution will rely on direct, circumstantial and documentary evidence to prove their case.

Earlier, judicial commissioner Datuk Ahmad Shahril Mohd Salleh allowed the prosecution's application to have 11 witnesses testify behind closed doors (in-camera) due to national security issues.

In-camera proceedings are trials where the public and press are not allowed to observe the procedure or process.

The first witness in the trial, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) assistant officer Muhammad Nizar, recounted how graft-busters had

conducted several sting operations to gather evidence concerning the case.

He said the MACC's special task force had initiated an operation dubbed Op Dinar 2 after learning of CBT offences carried out by officers in the Prime Minister's Department.

He said investigations showed that millions of ringgit in cash were stashed and hidden in various places.

"We eventually arrested a person known as Hasnul Ambia Abdullah Sani during a raid at Block B4 of the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya."

"We also raided several other places including a unit of the Shaftbury Residence in Cyberjaya and a house in Precinct 16 in Putrajaya," he said, adding that deputy director-general of the Prime Minister's Department

Research Division, Datuk Ruslin Jusoh, was also arrested on the same day.

He said the team finally made its first seizure of RM4.01 million during their second raid at the Shaftbury Residence on Aug 30, 2018, and another RM220,000 from another man's house in Kuala Terengganu.

The trial before Shahril will continue on Thursday.

Hasanah, who was charged with CBT on Oct 25 last year, is alleged to have committed the activity between April 30 and May 9 at her office in the Prime Minister's Department Complex in Putrajaya.

The charge, under Section 409 of the Penal Code, carries a maximum jail term of 20 years and whipping and fine, upon conviction.

New Straits Times Paper | 7 Oktober 2020 | Page: 13

RM1.25b SOLAR PROJECT CASE

MACC on a witch hunt against Rosmah, says lawyer

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) was yesterday accused of going on a witch hunt against Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor by selectively prosecuting her in the corruption case involving the RM1.25 billion solar hybrid project for rural schools in Sarawak.

Her lawyer, Datuk Akberdin Abdul Kader, accused the graft-busters of malicious prosecution and said MACC had been used by those who wanted to fix Rosmah.

"The charges against Rosmah are nothing but malicious prosecution. It is nothing but a witch hunt."

"It is all done with ill intention of maligning and fixing her up," he said when cross-examining MACC investigating officer Noornabilah Mohd Aziman.

However, the 30-year-old key prosecution witness in the trial denied this and also disagreed that MACC had targeted only Rosmah in the case.

She denied that MACC had only Rosmah in its crosshairs, as others, especially her former special aide Datuk Rizal Mansor, had al-

so been investigated for seeking bribes from Jepak Holdings Sdn Bhd, the company which was awarded the project.

On the prosecution's decision to drop charges against Rizal earlier this year, Noornabilah said it was beyond her knowledge if any plea bargain arrangement had been done by the prosecution with him.

To another question on why MACC had raided Rosmah's house even before an official report against her had been lodged in connection with the case, Noornabilah said there was nothing unusual about it as investigations were already ongoing.

Earlier, Akberdin was almost reduced to pulling his hair in despair when Noornabilah kept asking him to repeat his questions despite his best attempts to make himself clear.

At some points he was forced to repeat his questions three to four times when Noornabilah kept saying "please repeat the question", "I cannot remember" or "I don't know" to everything he asked.

Her answers left Akberdin gritting his teeth in frustration as he



Lawyer Datuk Akberdin Abdul Kader (centre) says the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission has been used by those who wanted to fix his client, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor. FILE PIC



composed himself and rephrased his questions for her.

Noornabilah is the final prosecution witness taking the stand in the case against Rosmah.

She completed her witness statement yesterday and is being cross-examined by the defence team today.

Akberdin started his cross-examination by asking the MACC officer her qualifications, to which Noornabilah said she held a Diploma in Accountancy and joined the commission as an in-

vestigating officer in 2013.

She was later queried on her investigations concerning the solar hybrid project which was awarded to Jepak Holdings.

Akberdin asked her about investigations involving another individual who had also allegedly sought bribes from the company.

However, Noornabilah insisted that she was not involved in the investigations of any other individual as her case only concerned Rosmah.

Rosmah is on trial for soliciting

RM187.5 million and two counts of receiving bribes totalling RM6.5 million from Jepak Holdings managing director Saidi Abang Samsudin.

The bribes were allegedly received as a reward for helping Jepak Holdings secure the project for 369 schools in Sarawak.

Rosmah was accused of committing the offences between January 2016 and Sept 2017.

The trial before High Court Judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan continues.

New Straits Times Paper | 7 Oktober 2020 | Page: 14

Ex-senior ministry man held over graft for tender

KUALA LUMPUR: A former principal assistant secretary of a ministry was arrested by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for allegedly accepting gratification over a tender issued by the ministry. The suspect, a 42-year-old man who is now a director at a training centre, was arrested at the commission's headquarters in Putrajaya on Monday. He was alleged to have received gratification from companies which competed for the tender to supply fertiliser to the ministry. "It was learnt that the tender, worth RM118 million for two years from last year to this year, was awarded to three companies belonging to the same person," a MACC source said. MACC deputy chief commissioner (Operations) Datuk Seri Ahmad Khusairi Yahaya confirmed the arrest, but declined to elaborate.

Bernama

New Straits Times Paper | 9 Oktober 2020 | Page: 10

AUSSIE PROPERTY PURCHASE SCANDAL

MACC: MARA INC SUSPECT LIKELY IN SABAH

DPP has agreed in principle to charge individuals involved in scandal, says chief commissioner

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ONE of the suspects in the Mara Incorporated Sdn Bhd property purchase scandal is likely in Sabah at the moment.

In an interview with MACC.fm yesterday, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC)

Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki said the deputy public prosecutor had agreed in principle to charge several individuals involved in the scandal.

"However, one of the individuals is probably residing in Sabah and could be under quarantine."

"Therefore, we need to wait and arrange for the right time to go ahead with this," he said.

The Mara Inc property purchase scandal came to light in 2015 when two Australian newspapers reported that the price of Dudley International House, was deliberately inflated by AU\$4.75 millions.

The newspapers also reported that millions of government funds were siphoned to purchase the student accommodation facility.



Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki being interviewed by MACC.fm in Putrajaya yesterday. PIC BY MOHD FADU HAMZAH

Azam also assured that MACC would handle the case impartially and would not protect any parties involved in the scandal.

Azam also said MACC was wrapping up investigations on several other cases, including the recent arrest of a former principal assistant secretary regarding mismanagement of a government tender.

"The suspect is believed to have received RM85,000 in cash from the companies."

"He also allegedly demanded

between seven and 10 per cent share from the company's profit to award the tender."

On Oct 6, Bernama reported that a 42-year-old man, who is a director at a training centre, was arrested by MACC for taking bribes to award the tender to supply fertiliser to a federal ministry.

Azam said such fund leakages would force the project cost to increase, or compel companies to reduce the quality of the fertiliser supply.

"I have heard that some government officers have criticised MACC for being vocal on this case."

"My intention is not to defame anyone, I am only stating the facts. Cases of fund leakage have been increasing since 2015 and this must stop," he said.

Quoting a source, Bernama also reported that RM118 million worth of tender have been awarded to three companies belonging to the same individual from 2019 to 2020.

New Straits Times Paper | 9 Oktober 2020 | Page: 14

EX-SPY AGENCY CHIEF CBT TRIAL

'PRIVATE CYBERJAYA APARTMENT USED TO CACHE DOCUMENTS'

Fourth prosecution witness claims to not know the kind of documents stored at his rented premises

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THE Research Division of the Prime Minister's Department officers used a private apartment in Cyberjaya to cache its documents, the High Court was told yesterday.

Businessman Mohd Azmin Hashim said Datuk Ruslin Jusoh, who was one of the senior officers in the division, had contacted him on April 2018 to use his apart-

ment for two weeks.

"I knew him and the accused since 2016 during a meeting at the Prime Minister's Department. I agreed to allow Ruslin to use the unit — no 2, level 13A Shaftbury Residence in Cyberjaya based on trust.

"However, I don't know what kind of documents they kept on the premises."

He said this when testifying as the fourth prosecution witness in the criminal breach of trust (CBT) trial involving former Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation (MEIO) director-general Datuk



Former Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation director-general Datuk Hasanah Abdul Hamid (centre) at the High Court in Kuala Lumpur on Monday. PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

Hasanah Abdul Hamid.

Hasanah was accused of committing CBT involving US\$12.1 million in funds belonging to the government.

Azmin said he met two officers from the Research Division — Maliki Mohamad and Hasnul Ambia Abdullah Sani at the Shaftbury's lobby several days later to hand over the keys to the apartment.

"Both of them told me that I was not allowed to come to the unit during the duration. I agreed and told my staff to do the same," he said, adding that he rented the apartment from a Singaporean and used it as his satellite office.

Azmin said that Hasnul had returned the keys to one of his business partners, Datuk Salahudin Yaakob, on June 26, 2018.

It was reported that the first prosecution witness, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Assistant officer Muhammad Nizar, on Tuesday testified that MACC had conducted several sting operations to gather evidence concerning the case.

This included several raids in Putrajaya and on two premises at the Shaftbury residence where they seized more than

RM4million from one of the units.

They also seized another RM220,000 from Maliki's parents house in Terengganu.

Several people were also arrested during the sting including Ruslin, Maliki, Hasnul, and Salahudin.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Ahmad Farid Ahmad Kamal told the court that Nizar was expected to identify the items in evidence — an undisclosed amount of cash and six luxury watches — next week.

The prosecution in their opening statement said Hasanah had used a portion of US\$12.2 million of government money she allegedly misappropriated to purchase six luxury watches.

Hasanah, who was charged with CBT on Oct 25 last year, is alleged to have committed the offence between April 30 and May 9 at her office in the Prime Minister's Department Complex in Putrajaya.

The charge, under Section 409 of the Penal Code, carries a maximum jail term of 20 years and whipping and fine upon conviction.

The trial before Judicial Commissioner Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh continues on Oct 12.

New Straits Times Paper | 10 Oktober 2020 | Page: 9

CONVICTED IN BRIBERY CASE

Vietnamese 'Datuk' bride-to-be granted stay of jail term

KUALA LUMPUR: A Vietnamese 'Datuk', who was sentenced to three years' jail and fined RM1.75 million for offering RM350,000 in bribes to a Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) officer, can now proceed with her wedding plans after she was allowed a postponement of her jail term.

Tran Thi Mai, 42, or also known as Datuk Maimunah, had spent over a year in the Kajang Women's Prison after she was sentenced by the Sessions Court on Sept 26, last year.

She had applied for a stay of execution last month, pending the disposal of her appeal against her conviction and sentence.

In allowing the businesswoman's application, High Court judge Datuk Muhammad Jamil Hussin said there were special circumstances in the application

which warranted a stay.

However, the judge ordered the accused to settle the RM1.75 million fine.

"Only the stay of the jail term is allowed but the applicant (Tran) needs to pay the fine for both charges," he said.

Jamil allowed Tran to be released on RM400,000 bail with two Malaysian sureties and ordered her to surrender her passport to the court until the disposal of the case.

"The accused must also report to the nearest Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office on the 7th of each month," he added.

Earlier, Tran's lawyer G. K. Sritharan submitted that his client, who is a Muslim convert, had been living in Malaysia for more than 10 years and planned to get married soon.

He said Tran had never missed

a day in court throughout her case and it was impossible for her to abscond.

"She only wanted to be with her child who is currently under her future husband's care."

"She comes from a wealthy family in Vietnam and they can pay the bail. The proof is that she has paid the bail (RM250,000) imposed on her at the Sessions Court."

"So there is no basis to say that she is a flight risk. She has no previous record. Besides, the court may impose additional conditions," he said.

The accused must also report to the nearest Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office on the 7th of each month.

DATUK MUHAMMAD JAMIL HUSSIN
High Court judge

He had also in submission said

that there was a defect in the charges against Tran.

Deputy public prosecutor Nor Diana Nor Azwa objected to the stay application, saying that issues pertaining to personal interests were just normal grounds which does not warrant a stay of execution.

She said the applicant frequently travelled to Vietnam, which showed that the latter had interests there.

"Moreover, there are rat lanes (illegal routes) where she can escape (from the country)," Nor Di-

ana added.

Tran was not present in court yesterday as all inmates in Kajang Prison were under quarantine.

The mother of four was charged at the Sessions Court on Nov 22, 2017, with two counts of offering bribes totalling RM350,000 to MMEA Sedili district director Amran Daud.

On the first count, she was accused of offering RM300,000 as an inducement for Amran to secure the release of three Vietnamese fishing vessels that were caught encroaching in Malaysian waters.

She was also charged with offering Amran RM50,000 for the same purpose.

Tran was found guilty by the Sessions Court of the two counts on Sept 26, last year and sentenced to three years' jail and fined RM1.75 million.

New Straits Times Paper | 10 Oktober 2020 | Page: 1 & 6

Socso: 30 false claims under wage subsidy programme detected

» PAGE 6

COMPLAINTS

'30 EMPLOYERS ABUSED WAGE SUBSIDY'

Alleged false claims detected in several states, says Socso CEO

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THE Social Security Organisation (Socso) has identified 30 employers who allegedly abused the Wage Subsidy Programme meant to safeguard employees' jobs and provide support for businesses.

Socso chief executive officer Datuk Seri Dr Mohammed Azman Aziz Mohammed said based on complaints received, the 30 suspected false claims were de-

tected in several states, including eight in Kedah, six in Selangor and five in Kuala Lumpur.

Three cases were detected in Perak, two each in Johor and Pahang, and one each in Kelantan, Sarawak, Sabah and Penang.

"We regret that there are parties who take advantage of the government's intention of helping employers and employees.

"To those out there who have made false claims and did not meet the eligibility criteria (for the wage subsidy programme), please come forward and return the money.



Datuk Seri Dr
Mohammed Azman
Aziz Mohammed

"If you have not channelled the funds to your employees, please do so," he said at a press conference here yesterday.

Azman also said a managing director of a company was detained by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for allegedly falsifying documents, claiming that his company had suffered an income reduction of 50 per cent. The payment made to the company that was under investigation amounted to RM415,000, he added.

Azman also said the company in question was involved in the service industry based in Selan-

gor, which claimed to have 185 employees.

"This is just one of the companies that we've identified and we will continue to cooperate with MACC (for similar cases).

"We don't want to accuse anybody of lying. But if there has been a genuine mistake in your application for the subsidy, please return the money."

He urged those with information of misuse to call, email or head to any of Socso's 53 offices nationwide to assist in investigations.

Socso, he added, had received 281 complaints from employees against their employers, who had claimed for the wage subsidy but did not disburse the money to their workers.

Asked whether Socso would improve the method of distribu-

tion to prevent wage subsidy abuse, Azman said Socso was only the implementing agency that acted according to the policies set by the government.

"We see no areas of weakness that need to be fixed, so we will continue to implement the subsidy as set by the government.

"There is, however, a small number of people who abuse it."

He said RM11.8 billion in wage subsidies had been disbursed to employers.

A total of 322,022 employers benefited from this initiative, which was announced by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin in March. The programme is part of the Prihatin Rakyat Economic Stimulus Package to help employers retain employees to prevent job losses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

New Straits Times Paper | 13 Oktober 2020 | Page: 8

CREDIT CARD BILLS

'ZAHID AWARE YAYASAN CHEQUES USED'

Witness: Zahid gave permission to use foundation's cheques to settle personal bills



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A FORMER executive secretary to Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday told the High Court that her former boss was well aware that he was using cheques from Yayasan Akalbudi to pay for his personal credit card bills.

Major Mazlina Mazlan, who was testifying in the former deputy prime minister's corruption trial, said this was because the latter had given her permission to use the charity foundation's cheques to make the payment.

Under re-examination by Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Raja Rozela Raja Toran, Mazlina



Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (second from right) leaving the Kuala Lumpur High Court after the proceedings yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

said she witnessed Zahid sign the cheques as it was done in front of her.

Raja Rozela: You were previously asked by Zahid's counsel about the cheques being pre-signed and you disagreed (with the contention). Why did you disagree?

Mazlina: I did not agree because Zahid signed the cheques in front of me.

Raja Rozela: At that time, did you see Zahid sign the cheques?

Mazlina: Yes, I saw it.

Raja Rozela: Did Zahid say anything to you at that time?

Mazlina: No.

The 90th witness also testified that Zahid did not say anything when he scrutinised the Yayasan Akalbudi cheques.

Asked about the usage of the

stamp bearing Zahid's signature, Mazlina said she was given permission by Zahid to use it on the cheques adding that Zahid had not, at any time, withdrawn his approval for her to use the stamp.

Trial continues before Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah today. Zahid is charged with 47 counts relating to criminal breach of trust (CBT), bribery and money-laundering involving millions of ringgit.

New Straits Times Paper | 15 Oktober 2020 | Page: 13

Duo plead not guilty to four graft charges

JOHOR BARU: Two men were slapped with four charges at the Sessions Court here yesterday for allegedly soliciting and receiving a RM17,000 bribe from a company owner between Oct 19 and Oct 26, 2015. Amir Nurashid Ahmad Nasaruddin, 42, faced three charges, while Mohd Zailani Mat Zin, 52, was slapped with one. Both men were charged under Section 16(a)(A) of the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission Act 2009 and pleaded not guilty to the charges read before Sessions Court judge Kamarudin Kamsun. Kamarudin set bail at RM15,000 with one surety for each of the men, and fixed Nov 17 for mention. Deputy Public Prosecutor Yunus Mohamed appeared for the prosecution while the accused were unrepresented.

New Straits Times Paper | 16 Oktober 2020 | Page: 6

RM6.3 MILLION IN BRIBES

Mat Sabu's ex-aide claims trial to graft charges

KUALA LUMPUR: An aide to former defence minister Mohamad Sabu, also known as Mat Sabu, was charged in the Sessions Court yesterday with soliciting and receiving RM6.3 million in bribes for a defence ministry project.

Mohd Azhar Che Mat Dali, 49, claimed trial to five counts before judge Azura Alwi.

According to the charge sheets, the kickbacks were meant for Azhar as the political secretary to Mohamad Sabu, who was then the defence minister.

On the first count, the accused was alleged to have asked for RM5 million from Elias Jemadi Tajudin, the managing director of FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd as a reward to help the company be selected as a partner and contractor for the ministry's project on the maintenance of intelligence equipment.

He allegedly committed the offence at a room in Le Apple Boutique Hotel, Jalan Ampang, here, on July 22 last year.

For the second to fifth charges, Azhar had received RM425,000, RM175,000, RM250,000 and a cheque for RM500,000 from the same person between September last year and February this year for the same purpose.

He was alleged to have received the monies through Zainuddin Abdul Majid, the director of Ikaira Resources and Ahmad Hisham Mohd Tajudin, the director of Aqsa Solutions Sdn Bhd.

The offences were allegedly committed at the parking space of the official residence of the former defence minister in Jalan Bellamy, Bukit Petaling, here, Precinct 16 in Putrajaya, a restaurant in Kampung Attap, here and in Jalan Thambipillay, here.

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission deputy public prosecutor Mahadi Abdul Jumaat said the prosecution proposed a RM500,000 bail for all five charges.

Azhar's counsel Ariff Azami Hussein pleaded for a minimum bail, saying that his client had been unemployed since the first Movement Control Order was imposed.

He said the father of seven was not a flight risk.

The judge set bail at RM300,000 with two local sureties and imposed additional conditions applied by the prosecution earlier. The case will be up for mention on Nov 26.

New Straits Times Paper | 23 Oktober 2020 | Page: 14

Director acquitted of extorting from Sunway chairman

PETALING JAYA: A company director was acquitted of extorting RM5 million from Sunway Group chairman Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah after the Attorney-General's Chambers decided not to pursue the case. On Feb 27 last year, Cheah Chyuan Yong, 39, pleaded not guilty at the magistrate's court to the charge of extorting from Cheah by threatening to make public a letter from the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission. The offence was allegedly committed with the aim to prompt Cheah to hand over a sum of money to Beh Chun Chuan and to settle all the accused's debt with Sunway Leasing Sdn Bhd totalling RM5 million. The man was alleged to have committed the offence at the Sunway Pyramid shopping mall here on Oct 12, 2018. **Bernama**

New Straits Times Paper | 24 Oktober 2020 | Page: 9

CASE MANAGEMENT ON NOV 27

MAT SABU'S EX-AIDE CHARGED WITH BRIBERY AGAIN

Mohd Azhar Che Mat Dali accused of taking RM130,000 in bribes from contractor company

SHAH ALAM

AN ex-political secretary to former Defence Minister Mohamad Sabu was charged again in the Sessions Court here yesterday with two counts of accepting bribes totalling RM130,000 from a contractor company last year.

Mohd Azhar Che Mat Dali, 49, pleaded not guilty after both charges were read out to him before judge Rofiah Mohamad.

On the first count, Azhar was charged with accepting RM50,000 from Aqsa Solution Sdn Bhd managing director Elias Jemadi Tajudin as gratification for assisting FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd to be selected as the strategic partner and maintenance contractor for the ministry's intelligence system.

He was alleged to have committed the offence in his official car at Lorong VIP, Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Sepang in August last year.



Mohd Azhar Che Mat Dali (centre) being escorted by police at the Shah Alam Sessions Court yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

On the second count, Azhar was charged with accepting RM80,000 from Elias Jemadi, who is also FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd managing director, through Ikaira Resources director Zainudin Abdul Majid for the same purpose.

The offence was allegedly committed at the Kota Damansara Driving Range, Petaling Jaya at the end of last year.

Both charges were framed under Section 16(a)(B) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009 which carries a maximum imprison-

ment of 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the amount of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if convicted.

Earlier, MACC deputy public prosecutor Mahadi Abdul Jumaat offered bail of RM30,000 with one surety.

This came with an additional condition — for Azhar to report to the Putrajaya MACC office on the first week of every month starting November.

However, Azhar's lawyer Ariff Azami Hussein requested for a minimum bail on grounds that his client was no longer working

and had to support a wife and seven children, including two who were still in school, as well as his mother-in-law.

The court allowed bail at RM15,000 for both charges and ordered the accused to report himself to the Putrajaya MACC office on the first week of every month.

The court set Nov 27 for case management.

On Oct 15, Azhar was charged in the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court on five counts of soliciting and accepting bribes totalling RM6.35 million. **Bernama**

New Straits Times Paper | 24 Oktober 2020 | Page: 16

Former assistant engineer gets jail, fine for corruption

MELAKA: A former assistant engineer was sentenced to 14 years' jail and fined RM341,000 by the Sessions Court here yesterday for six counts of corruption involving over RM65,000. Judge Datuk Mohd Nasir Nordin handed down the sentence on Hairudin Ngadiron, 45, who was previously working at the Royal Malaysia Police Technical College in Bakri, Johor. The judge ordered the jail sentence to be served concurrently and in default another six months' jail on each count if he failed to pay the fine. Hairudin was charged with accepting bribes in the form of home repair items such as roofing materials, tiles, wooden panels, doors and car repairs amounting to RM65,886.72 from January to April 2017. **Bernama**

New Straits Times Paper | 24 Oktober 2020 | Page: 21

1MDB PLUNDER

GOLDMAN'S IMAGE IN TATTERS AGAIN

US bank's costs from scandal breaches
US\$5b after latest settlements

KUALA LUMPUR

GOLDMAN Sachs Group Inc, pilloried after the 2008 financial crisis, just saw a decade of image repair tarnished as prosecutors and regulators around the world unleashed accusations and punishments against the bank after a years-long probe into the plundering of Malaysia's 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) investment fund.

Goldman's costs from the scandal hurtled beyond US\$5 billion on Thursday while a subsidiary pleaded guilty to a United States criminal charge for the first time in the firm's history.

The parent company entered a deal to spare itself a conviction that could cripple business by promising to behave.

In a rare rebuke, Goldman will also force chief executive officer

David Solomon and predecessor Lloyd Blankfein to give up pay, attaching personal accountability to two of the industry's most visible leaders for a scandal spanning the globe.

But, on top of all that, the settlements provide another gritty look at the mechanics of a costly financial scheme involving the Wall Street giant — with court documents quoting from internal emails and conversations.

In its deal with the US Justice Department, the bank admitted executives and other staff conspired to pay more than US\$1.6 billion in bribes to win business in Malaysia. That settlement includes the highest penalty ever under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

The new 1MDB settlements with authorities on three continents threaten to concentrate critics' attention on the firm in an



Goldman Sachs Group Inc, in attaching personal accountability to chief executive officer David Solomon and predecessor Lloyd Blankfein over the 1MDB scandal, is forcing them to give up pay. AFP PIC

era of mounting frustration with Wall Street's success during an economic slump and widening income disparity.

"I wouldn't underestimate the impact of that backdrop," said Peter Atwater, an adjunct lecturer at William & Mary. "Goldman is very fortunate to settle this today. If the social mood were to deteriorate, the financial cost and the legal ramifications would be much more dire."

The case focuses on the firm's fundraising work in 2012 and 2013 for 1MDB. Goldman's investment-banking group, led at the time by Solomon, collected US\$600 million from the bond sales.

The bank reached an initial accord with Malaysia in July that included a payment of US\$2.5 billion.

In a 36-page deferred-prosecution agreement and accompanying statement of facts, US prosecutors go further in describing what transpired than was previously known, including behind-the-scenes exchanges that may become fodder for critics, from

progressive activists to lawmakers.

From Wall Street's perspective, the latest raft of settlements was long-anticipated and the magnitude of the penalties in line with expectations.

The bank said it would book an additional US\$250 million in the third quarter to cover the cost beyond previous reserves.

"It's an enormous price," Glenn Schorr, an analyst at Evercore ISI, said of the settlement payments. But "it's the price they had to pay to, I would say, have the flexibility to fully run their company and focus on growing and moving the company forward".

The accords lift a legal cloud that formed during Blankfein's tenure and remained through the hand-off to Solomon two years ago.

"This has been a long process and we are pleased to be putting these matters behind us. But, we are not putting the lessons learned from this experience behind us," Solomon wrote in a memo to staff on Thursday.

Bloomberg

NOT GUILTY PLEA

EX-INTEL CHIEF CHARGED WITH GRAFT

He is among 3 Defence Ministry senior officers accused of soliciting, receiving bribes

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THREE Defence Ministry senior officers, including the former Intelligence Division director-general, were charged at the Sessions Court, here, with soliciting and receiving bribes since last year.

The accused, Strategic Cyber Warfare Defence Intelligence Division chief Lieutenant Colonel Che Ahmad Idris, 53; Defence Ministry adviser Brigadier-General Mohammed Feizol Anuar Ayob, 50; and former Intelligence



Former Intelligence Division director-general Lieutenant General (retired) Datuk Sheikh Mokhsin Sheikh Hassan at the Kuala Lumpur court complex yesterday.
PIC BY EIZAIRI SHAMSUDIN

Division director-general Lieutenant-General (retired) Datuk Sheikh Mokhsin Sheikh Hassan, 59; pleaded not guilty when the charges were read to them separately before judge Datin Sabariah Othman yesterday.

Che Ahmad was charged with

five counts of soliciting and agreeing to receive RM500,000, and receiving bribes of RM105,000 from FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd managing director Elias Jemadi Tajudin.

The bribes were allegedly given for him to propose the appoint-

ment of the company through direct negotiation.

He was accused of committing the offence at the Tun Osman Jawa Defence Ministry housing complex, Jalan Padang Tembak, between September last year and April this year.

Feizol was charged with five counts of receiving RM128,000 in bribes from Elias Jemadi through the latter's daughter and FEHM Entity director Hishamuddin Johari.

The bribes were for him to make the company a strategic partner with the ministry.

He was accused of committing the offence at several places between Oct 30 last year and June 24 this year.

Sheikh Mokhsin was charged with soliciting RM1 million, agreeing to receive RM1 million and four counts of receiving RM266,000 from Elias Jemadi.

The bribes were given so that he would approve the appointment of FEHM Entity through di-

rect negotiation.

He allegedly committed the offence at several places, including his office and a hotel, near here, between June last year and June this year.

Sheikh Mokhsin was also charged with receiving a RM50,000 bribe from Syed Omar Syed Mohamad for appointing Malvus Sense Sdn Bhd to provide two special systems for Defence Intelligence staff at his office on June 26 this year.

All charges were framed under Section 16(a)(B) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009.

The offence carries a maximum imprisonment of 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the amount of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

The court set bail of RM80,000, RM60,000 and RM110,000 for Che Ahmad, Feizol and Sheikh Mokhsin, respectively.

The court also fixed Nov 27 for mention.

New Straits Times Paper | 29 Oktober 2020 | Page: 14

Singaporean fined, jailed for offering RM100 bribe

JOHOR BARU: A Singaporean was jailed and fined by the Sessions Court here yesterday after he pleaded guilty to a charge of bribing an immigration officer. Yong Boon Tao, 43, was accused of giving a RM100 bribe to an immigration officer as an inducement not to take any action against him for violating the requirement for the Reciprocal Green Lane programme. He was charged under Section 17(b) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009. Yap also faced an alternative charge under Section 214 of the Penal Code for the same offence. He pleaded guilty to the alternative charge. Judge Kamarudin Kamsun sentenced Yap to two weeks in jail starting from the day of his arrest and a fine of RM10,000, in default six months' jail.

New Straits Times Paper | 31 Oktober 2020 | Page: 10

RM10,000 FINE

Ex-MACC officer fined for extorting policeman

BUKIT MERTAJAM: A former Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) officer was fined RM10,000 by the magistrate's court here yesterday after he was found guilty of extorting from a police officer three years ago.

Rommy Ma'i'aruf, 41, clad in a blue short-sleeve shirt, was calm when magistrate Sri Pracha Nanthini Balabedha handed down the sentence.

She sentenced the accused after finding the defence had failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt.

She also ordered the father of three to serve a 24-month jail sentence if he failed to pay the fine.

On Nov 30, 2017, Rommy had claimed trial to committing the offence against the police officer. The latter was responsible for reporting illegal gambling activities in the Seberang Prai Tengah district.

He was charged under Section 384 of the Penal Code which carries a maximum 10 years' imprisonment or fine or both upon conviction.

Deputy public prosecutors Muhammad Nazri Abdul Rahim and Yusaini Amer Abdul Karim prosecuted while the accused was represented by counsel Pi-yara Singh.

Rommy, an Assistant Superintendent based at the Putrajaya MACC Intelligence Unit (Northern Zone), was arrested by police in a restaurant near Machang Bubuk here on June 9, 2017.

He was detained after he was found to have committed extortion against Inspector Ahmad Hasbi Mohd Fauzi, 35, in the compound of the Seberang Jaya Petronas petrol station about 9.30pm.

The accused had intentionally caused the police officer, attached to the Seberang Prai Tengah police headquarters, to surrender RM3,000 monthly to him, to protect the victim for lodging the report.

Rommy paid the fine.

It is learnt that he is no longer with the MACC.