

NEWS PAPER CUTTING ON FEBRUARY 2021
NEWS STRAIT TIMES

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FRUITFUL TALKS

'GOVT WILL RESOLVE MEAT CARTEL ISSUE

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry, MACC have taken measures, says minister

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THE government has given an assurance that the meat cartel issue will be resolved through legal avenues.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri said the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) had taken the necessary steps to curb the imported meat cartel operations.

"It is better (to have) the enforcement carried out by the authorities in accordance with the law.

"*Insyallah*, after the trial and legal action in court, everything will be resolved," he said in his Instagram posting yesterday.

He said the roundtable discussions held by the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) with agencies and stakeholders had been fruitful.

Zulkifli said the public may refer to www.halal.gov.my or the SmartHalal application for more information on the status of halal importers.

The *New Straits Times* front-paged a report in December last year about the meat cartel, which had been in operation for more

than 40 years.

Senior officers from no fewer than four government agencies were believed to be working hand in glove with the syndicate to bring non-certified meat into

Malaysia and distributing it as halal-certified products.

The senior officers, tasked with ensuring that halal standards were upheld, allegedly turned a blind eye to the cartel's operations.

They were alleged to have received money as bribes and, in some cases, solicited women for sex.

Investigations by MACC led to the arrest of 11 people, including five Malaysian Quarantine and Inspection Services Department (Maqis) officers, a delivery agent, as well as directors and employees of two importing companies.



Datuk Seri Dr
Zulkifli Mohamad
Al-Bakri

ISA SAMAD
SENTENCED TO
6 YEARS' JAIL, FINED
FOR RECEIVING BRIBES
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FAILURE TO CAST DOUBT ON PROSECUTION'S CASE

ISA GETS 6 YEARS' JAIL AND RM15.4M FINE

Judge rules ex-Felda chairman's defence an afterthought, a bare denial and a poorly made-up story

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THE narrative of former Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad's defence was merely an afterthought, a bare denial and a poorly made-up story, the High Court ruled before sentencing the veteran Umno politician to six years jail and RM15.4 million fine for corruption.

Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali described Isa's case as such before sentencing him for nine counts of receiving bribes of more than RM3 million over the purchase of a hotel, in Sarawak.

In convicting Isa under Section 16 (a)(A) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009, the judge ruled that the defence had failed to cast any doubt on the prosecution's case.

He said the accused had failed on the balance of probabilities to rebut his charges of corruptly receiving the money as a reward to

approve the purchase of Merdeka Palace Hotel & Suites in Kuching, Sarawak by Felda Investment Corporation Sdn Bhd, a Felda subsidiary.

"The accused's defence was an afterthought, inconsistent and a mere bare denial which was made without basis and could not be trusted.

"The court also found that the accused's defence as a whole had failed to raise any doubt and the prosecution had succeeded in proving its case beyond reasonable doubts," Nazlan said in his brief judgement.

Regarding the narrative raised by the defence that the bribes were part of a plan by the accused's former aide Muhammad Zahid Md Arip, who had conspired with several individuals to embezzle the commission from the sale of the hotel, Mohd Nazlan said the allegation had no merit.

"The court does not accept the theory. There is no evidence by the defence witness to show that this was actually what happened," he said.

Nazlan added that the confession by Zahid about getting RM2 million in kickbacks was not challenged in court.

He said defence witnesses Mohammad Jani Ismail and Dabalan Tunggal had, in a statutory declaration, affirmed in October 2019, that they heard Zahid con-

fessing to receiving the money.

"Therefore, the court finds that the defence on Zahid's confession was an afterthought, is actually just made-up and it is a poorly made-up story," Nazlan said.

On the purported confession made by Zahid months before Isa was charged, the judge said the confession was not reported by Isa at any time to the MACC investigating officer.

This, he said was a new matter which was raised by the defence in the trial.

"Although SP21 (Zahid) admitted to have implicated the accused in the case on two occasions and agreed to correct the statement to the MACC, Isa did not at any time report the confession to the MACC.

The defence, he said, did not cross-examine Zahid on the two meetings or call witnesses to support the contention.

"This again, is an afterthought defence and mere made-up story," the judge said.

He then ordered Isa to serve six years jail for each of the nine counts.

Nazlan also imposed a RM15.4 million fine on Isa for all the charges.

However, he ordered that all the jail sentences run concurrently. This means Isa will only serve a total of six years' jail.

Isa would also have to serve an



Former Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Samad (front, centre) leaving the Kuala Lumpur High Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY EZAIRI SHAMSUDDIN

additional 18 years in jail if he fails to pay the fine.

Nazlan later granted Isa a stay of execution of his jail term and fine pending his appeal to the Court of Appeal.

The judge, however, ordered Isa's bail to be increased from RM800,000 to RM1.5 million.

Nazlan also imposed an additional condition on Isa which was for him to report to the police station on the first day of each month until the disposal of the appeal.

"The accused will have make the payment of bail by 2pm tomorrow (today)," he said.

A total of 22 prosecution witnesses and six defence witnesses, which included Isa, testified in the trial which started on Oct 8, 2019.

On June 16, last year, Isa was ordered to enter his defence against the nine corruption charges after the court was satisfied that there was credible and sufficient evidence against him to prove the essential elements of the offence of accepting gratification.

However, on the same day, the court acquitted and discharged Isa of the single criminal breach of trust (CBT) charge he faced in-

volving the same hotel after finding that the prosecution had failed to prove a prima facie case against him.

On Dec 14, 2018, Isa pleaded not guilty to one count of CBT and nine counts of receiving gratification amounting to more than RM3 million, by approving a proposal for the purchase of a hotel in Kuching, Sarawak, for Felda Investment Corporation Sdn Bhd, a Felda subsidiary.

He allegedly committed the CBT offence at Level 50, Menara Felda, Platinum Park, No. 11, Persiaran KLCC near here on April 29, 2014.

The charge under Section 409 of the Penal Code carries an imprisonment for up to 20 years, whipping and fine, if found guilty.

On the corruption counts, Isa was charged with committing the offences at Level 49, Menara Felda, between July 21, 2014, and Dec 11, 2015.

The charges framed under Section 16(a)(A) of the MACC Act, punishable under Section 24(1) of the same law carries a jail term of not exceeding 20 years and a fine of at least five times the bribe amount, or RM10,000, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

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MALAYSIAN ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

Duo fined RM50,000 each for cheating company director

KUALA LUMPUR: Two men were each fined RM50,000 by the Sessions Court here for cheating a company director in December last year.

Judge Azura Alwi meted out the sentence to Mohd Hussein Mohd Nasir and Razaly Mat Sari after both of them pleaded guilty to the offence yesterday.

The court also sentenced Hussein to seven days in jail.

The court also ordered the duo to serve an additional eight months' in prison if they failed to pay the fine.

According to the charge sheet, Hussein and Razaly had duped Norazman Mohd Nor, 50, by claiming that they could help him change the outcome of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's (MACC) investigation into him.

This had prompted Norazman to give RM40,000 to the duo to assist him in changing the MACC

investigation from being about soliciting bribes to failure to report bribery to the graft busters.

Hussein and Razaly were charged under Section 415 of the Penal Code, punishable under Section 417 with a maximum of five years' imprisonment or a fine, or both, upon conviction.

Earlier, counsel Adha Amin and Fahmi Abd Moin, who represented Hussein and Razaly, pleaded for a minimum sentence.

They said both the accused were sole breadwinners in their families and suffered from chronic health issues.

"Both accused also gave their full cooperation during the MACC's investigation," the lawyers said.

However, deputy public prosecutor Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin pressed for a deterrent sentence due to the seriousness of the offence.

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PENDING APPEAL

CONVICTED ISA POSTS BAIL OF RM1.5M

Ex-Felda chairman was found guilty of receiving more than RM3 million in bribes

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FORMER Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad has posted bail of RM1.5 million following his conviction for receiving more than RM3 million in bribes.

Isa arrived at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex in Jalan Duta with his wife Bibi Sharliza Mohd Khalid at 10.35am.

Clad in a blue shirt, Isa was calm and smiled to pressmen who waited for him since 9am.

The former Negri Sembilan menteri besar spent several minutes at the High Court registration office and left after completing the documentation.

The money was paid by Bibi as his bailor.

High Court judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali convicted Isa of all nine charges he faced, ruling that the defence had failed to raise any doubt in the prosecution's case against him.

The judge also imposed a RM15.4 million fine on Isa, in default 18 years in jail, for all the charges.

Nazlan also imposed an additional condition on Isa, which was for him to report to a police station on the first day of each month until the disposal of



Former Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad arriving at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex in Jalan Duta yesterday to post his bail. PIC BY HAIRUL ANUAR RAHIM

the appeal.

In handing down the sentence, Nazlan highlighted the seriousness of corruption offences which are threatening the country's economy and the democratic system.

The court also took note of the accused's background, administrative record and his involvement in politics, having served as menteri besar for two decades and also as a cabinet minister.

Isa was charged with nine counts of receiving gratification

amounting to more than RM3 million, by approving a proposal for the purchase of a hotel in Kuching, Sarawak, for Felda Investment Corporation Sdn Bhd (FICSB), a Felda subsidiary.

Isa allegedly committed the criminal breach of trust (CBT) offence at Level 50, Menara Felda, Platinum Park, No. 11, Persiaran KLCC near here on April 29, 2014.

The charge under Section 409 of the Penal Code carries imprisonment of up to 20 years, whipping and a fine, if found guilty.

On the corruption counts, Isa was charged with committing the offences at Level 49, Menara Felda, between July 21, 2014, and Dec 11, 2015.

The charges, framed under Section 16(a)(A) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act, and punishable under Section 24(1) of the same law, carry a jail term not exceeding 20 years and a fine of at least five times the bribe amount, or RM10,000, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

New Straits Times Paper | 6 Februari 2021 | Page: 12

AUSSIE PROPERTY SCANDAL

Ex-Mara Inc chairman slapped with 22 charges

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Mara Incorporated Sdn Bhd (Mara Inc) chairman Datuk Mohammad Lan Allani was slapped with 22 corruption charges totalling RM20.45 million involving the purchase of properties in Australia nine years ago.

The 65-year-old pleaded not guilty to all charges when he was produced in two Sessions Courts here yesterday.

The charges were read to him separately before judges Azura Alwi and Rozina Ayob.

The accused is facing 17 charges of receiving RM17.45 millions from Optimus Capital Sdn Bhd director Mazrul Haizad Marof in various locations, including Solaris Mont Kiara, Maybank Mont Kiara branch, a restaurant in Bukit Kiara and a CIMB Bank branch in Jalan Saungting, Kota Kinabalu.

The money was an inducement for him to approve a proposal paper titled "Proposed Acquisition of a Student Accommodation Building and a Commercial Retail Block known as Dudley In-

ternational House, 7-14 Dudley Street, Caulfield East, Victoria 3145, Melbourne, Australia".

Lan was also charged with three counts of soliciting a RM3 million bribe from Datuk Ding Pei Chai — the owner of Marinn Property Pte Ltd and Carlton Pte Ltd that managed two other Australian properties — near a residence in Bukit Bandaraya and Connoisseurs Lounge & Restaurant, KL Golf & Country Club, between May and June 2013.

The money was an inducement for the accused to facilitate the remaining payment on the stocks purchase between the companies and Mara Inc.

He was charged under Sections 16(a) and 17(a) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009, which carries a fine of not less than 10 times the value of the bribe or RM1 million, whichever is higher, or imprisonment for up to 20 years, or both upon conviction.

The accused was also alleged to have involved himself in money laundering by receiving proceeds



Former Mara Incorporated Sdn Bhd chairman Datuk Mohammad Lan Allani arriving at the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court yesterday. PIC BY FATHIL ASRI

of unlawful activities amounting to RM10 million on Dec 10, 2012, at a CIMB Bank branch near Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

For that alleged offence, he faced two charges under Section 4(1) of the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001.

Earlier, deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib urged the court to impose RM400,000 bail in one surety against Lan.

However, counsel Hisyam Teh Poh Teik, who represented the accused, applied for the bail to be paid in two instalments.

"My client is not able to produce

RM400,000 this morning," he said while pointing out that the accused also suffered from heart disease and an injured spine.

The bail was allowed to be paid in two instalments, the first RM200,000 to be paid by yesterday and the balance before Feb 16. The court also ordered the accused to surrender his passport until the disposal of the case.

MACC's probe into the matter first began after a *Sydney Morning Herald* report about a Malaysian residing in Australia, who was accused of bribing a Malaysian official to secure Mara's purchase of the multimil-

lion-dollar apartment complex in Melbourne in 2013.

Later, the Dudley property scandal came to light in 2015 when two Australian newspapers reported that the price of Dudley International House was deliberately inflated by A\$4.75 million.

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

The Australian media report then led to a revelation of other properties said to have also been bought by Mara at inflated prices.

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TRIAL OF EX-TABUNG HAJI CHAIRMAN

Latif to testify against brother Azeez in RM4 million bribery case

KUALA LUMPUR: The elder brother of former Tabung Haji chairman Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim was yesterday given a discharge not amounting to an acquittal (DNAA) from two charges of abetting his brother to obtain a RM4 million bribe.

Abdul Latif Abdul Rahim's case was dropped by Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi after she allowed an application by the prosecution to grant the DNAA against him.

Deputy public prosecutor Adam Mohamed said the prosecution made the application after Latif agreed to become a witness against his brother.

"The defence had sent two rep-

resentation letters to the Attorney-General's Chambers requesting us to drop his charges three months ago. Today (yesterday), we told the court about our request (over the DNAA) and the court allowed it," he said.

Latif was accused of abetting his brother in obtaining a RM4 million bribe from Mohammad Redzuan Mohanan Abdullah, director of Syarikat Menuju Asas Sdn Bhd, as gratification to help the company secure road projects through limited tender from the Works Ministry.

The court yesterday also vacated Azeez's trial which was scheduled to resume following a High Court ruling which granted a stay



Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim (left) and his elder brother, Abdul Latif Abdul Rahim.

on the hearing pending Azeez's application to quash his 13 corruption charges including money laundering.

Azeez's counsel Joshua Tay when contacted confirmed the matter.

"We received a letter from the High Court Senior Deputy Registrar Norazilah Asmuni informing us about the matter."

The Baling member of parliament on Dec 23 had applied to

strike out all of his corruption charges at the High Court.

Azeez claimed the prosecution against him was mala fide and that the charges were defective and groundless.

The trial of the corruption case involving Azeez and his brother Latif had been held before judge Azura with five prosecution witnesses being called.

Azeez, 53, is charged with three counts of accepting bribes to-

talling RM5.2 million in connection with road projects in Perak and Kedah, and nine counts of money laundering, involving nearly RM140 million, while his 62-year-old brother was accused of abetting him.

The project involved the Pantai Baru Coastal Expressway Project and upgrading works of Federal Road FT005 (Teluk Intan to Kampung Lekir, Perak) valued at RM644,480,000.

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Low was 'The Man' in 1MDB, says ex-CEO

KUALA LUMPUR: Fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low was "The Man" in 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) even though he had no official position in the company.

A witness in the 1MDB trial involving former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak over the misappropriation of RM2.28 billion of 1MDB funds, said Low had the authority to make crucial decisions in the company.

Former 1MDB chief executive officer (CEO) Mohd Hazem Abdul Rahman said that being the case, he had no personal problem sharing internal information with Low.

During cross-examination by Najib's counsel Wan Aizuddin Wan Mohammed, Hazem said

Low even had the authority to decide who would become the next CEO.

In his answer, Hazem referred to an e-mail he sent to 1MDB chief financial officer (CFO) Azmi Tahir stating that he would recommend Azmi to Low if Azmi was interested in becoming the next CEO.

The 10th prosecution witness testified that at times, when Low gave out instructions, the people planted by Low in the company would refer to him as "PMO" (Prime Minister's Office).

"There were times when the CFO would brief the board of di-

rectors and if there were instructions from Jho Low, we would say "PMO," he said.

Asked what had stopped him from saying that the instructions were from Low instead of PMO, Hazem said it was because "obviously, Low was not supposed to be there".

He said Low had planted cronies in 1MDB, who included former 1MDB general counsel Jasmine Loo and Jerome Lee, who was a member of the company's investment team.

"These people are no longer in the country," Hazem said.



Former 1Malaysia Development Bhd chief executive officer Mohd Hazem Abdul Rahman (second from left) at the High Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

'I was told not to mention Low's name'

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its a rule basically that his name cannot be a part of the company.

The witness said even before he joined 1MDB he was told by Low that his name should never be mentioned in any official 1MDB meeting and it was part of the modus operandi.

Hazem said Low told him this during their meeting in Putrajaya when he was offered the position of chief operating officer for 1MDB in 2012.

"This is not just any company. It is government-owned and held by the most supreme power in Malaysia," he said when asked whether he was puzzled or taken aback when he was told about it.

Hazem agreed with the lawyer's question that Low knew about the transactions of 1MDB's projects.

The trial continues before High Court judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah today. Najib, 68, faces 20 years' jail and fine, if convicted.

The witness said although Low had control over 1MDB, the businessman's name was never to be mentioned and this was well understood by him and others in the company.

Wan Aizuddin: Apart from Low, there were no other people

that told you not to mention his name on record and in meetings?

Hazem: Everybody is aware and understood that Low's name was not supposed to be mentioned. It is well understood and

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TRANSFER OF 1MDB FUNDS

DPP: NAJIB CAUGHT WITH HANDS IN THE TILL

Ex-PM remains silent despite being given enough time to clear allegations, court told

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak failed to justify the transfer of RM2.973 billion of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) funds into his three personal bank accounts despite all the opportunities he had to do so, the High Court was told yesterday.

Deputy public prosecutor Muhammad Saifuddin Hashim Musalmi said Najib received the monies through several entities, including Good Star Ltd, a firm controlled by fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low.

"In the final analysis, the colos-

sal sum of RM2.973 billion found accumulated in Najib's AmBank account in three stages from Good Star, Aabar, and Tanore remains the elephant in the room.

"Najib was accorded all the opportunities in the world to clear the allegations as he was metaphorically caught taking monies from a till, yet, there is a deathly silence from him.

"We hear no cries of innocence from him on the simple question — 'Why did the 1MDB monies end up in your personal accounts, not once, not twice, but thrice, sir?'" he said before Judge Datuk Muhammad Jamil Hussin.

He said this in his submissions to oppose the third-party claims made by Najib and Umno following a raid conducted by police at the Pavilion apartment owned by OBYU Holdings Sdn Bhd in November 2018.

Saifuddin, who is the head of Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC) Money Laundering and Forfeiture of Criminal Proceeds, said Good Star, Low, Prince Faisal, Prince Said, Blackstone



Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak arriving at the High Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

Asia Real Estate Partners and Najib did not have any connection or business dealing with 1MDB to justify their receipt of such amount of monies.

"There were no business or commercial reasons for such movements of monies. There is also no escaping the fact that the monies in Najib's accounts are proceeds from money laundering offences as it was traceable directly to 1MDB through Good Star and Aabar Stage," he said.

He said there was much evidence to prove that the seized items indeed came from money laundering and unlawful activities.

"By extending the 'three-strikes and you are out' analogy, the preponderance of evidence speaks volumes in support of our case.

"Surely Najib is not Ali Baba of the Arabian Nights, who discovered the thieves' den, except perhaps he too knows the magical phrase, Open Sesame, to summon the fortune from 1MDB into his personal accounts.

"Even then, there is no mistake about it — the modern-day Ali Baba and the likes of Jim Hawkins of Treasure Island, who found great fortune falling onto their lap stand to forfeit the ill-gotten fortune under the Money

Laundering Act," he said.

He said Najib and Umno had made a feeble claim to suggest the seized cash was political donations due to the weight of evidence which suggests otherwise.

"No amount of finesse can whitewash the traces of wrongdoings stemming from the cash seized. Perhaps, just perhaps, in the end, the only glimmer of hope for redemption from 'Pirates of the Caribbean — The Curse of the Black Pearl' for Najib and Umno lies in a total, complete and honourable disgorgement of all benefits derived from the tainted 1MDB monies, in much the same way as Captain Barbosa sought to return every single piece of the 882 medallions to the treasure of Hernan Cortes on Isla de Muerta."

Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah represented Najib, while Datuk Hariharan Tara Singh and Tania Scivetti appeared for Umno.

The court set March 11 and 15 to hear reply submissions from Shafee and Hariharan.

On May 8, 2019, the A-GC filed a notice of forfeiture over hundreds of items, including branded handbags and 27 vehicles seized from Najib, his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, their three

children and 13 people and companies.

Money amounting to more than RM18 million in several accounts at Bank Islam Malaysia Bhd, Al-Rajhi Bank Bhd, Malayan Banking Bhd, CIMB Bank Bhd, RHB Bank Bhd, Public Bank Bhd, AmBank Bhd and Hong Leong Bank Bhd was frozen between Aug 16, 2018, and March 11, 2019.

It named Najib as the first respondent followed by Rosmah, Riza Shahriz Abdul Aziz, Nor Ashman Razak Mohd Najib, Nooryana Najwa Mohd Najib, Mohd Kyzzad Mesran, Senjauhar Sdn Bhd, Aiman Ruslan, Yayasan Rakyat 1Malaysia, Yayasan Semesta, Yayasan Mustika Kasih, Rembulan Kembara Sdn Bhd, Goh Gaik Ewe, Ng Chong Hwa, Lim Hwee Bin, Kee Kok Thiam, Tan Vern Tact and Geh Choh Hun.

The application was filed on the grounds that the prosecution, acting under Section 56 (1) read together with Section 376 of the Criminal Procedure Code, was satisfied that the items seized between May 17, 2018, and March 11, 2019, were related to an offence under Section 4 (1) or as the result of illegal activities involving the respondents.

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MIXING OF FROZEN BEEF FROM UNCERTIFIED ABATTOIRS

Ministry to probe into Puchong warehouse

KUALA LUMPUR: The Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry has given an assurance that an investigation will be carried out into the mixing of frozen beef from uncertified abattoirs at a Puchong cold storage warehouse recently.

Its deputy minister, Datuk Che Abdullah Mat Nawati, said the ministry was committed to investigating any company that misused import permits to bring in supplies from uncertified sources.



The Puchong cold storage warehouse which was raided by the authorities last Friday. PIC COURTESY OF POLICE

“Of course, we will (investigate the Puchong company). Previously, the (agriculture and food industries) minister had given an assurance to cancel permits if they misused them and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Com-

mission (MACC) is committed to investigating the matter,” he told the *New Straits Times*.

He was responding to queries on the raid and seizure of three containers of frozen beef by the authorities in Puchong last Friday.

The Malaysian Quarantine and Inspection Services Department (Maqis) said the frozen beef was from an uncertified abattoir. It said the frozen beef was a mixture of meat from certified and uncertified abattoirs.

Che Abdullah urged companies with valid import permits to make full use of them while respecting the sensitivities of Muslims in the country.

“Be responsible and sensible. Do not do anything that will cause public concern.”

Meanwhile, the NST has received information that the company in Puchong had been in the carcass meat business for about 15 years with some of the supplies coming from uncertified sources without halal certification.

The company is believed to be using fake proxy companies, which have valid import permits, to bring in parts such as bones, lungs, tail and stomach.

The company is also believed to be supplying the products to local markets in the Klang Valley.



Datuk Che Abdullah Mat Nawati

By Mohamed Basyir

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11TH PROSECUTION WITNESS

NAJIB TOLD CABINET ABOUT 'DONATION'

But he told them Saudi prince requested that contribution to Yayasan 1MDB be kept a secret, says witness

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FORMER prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak told his ministers about the alleged donation that he received from Saudi royalty a few months after the inception of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), the High Court heard yesterday.

However, Najib also said the donation, which allegedly came from Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, must be kept discreet as per the latter's request.

Former cabinet deputy secretary-general Tan Sri Mazidah Abdul Majid, 72, said Najib, during a cabinet meeting on Sept 8, 2010, spoke about a donation he received under Yayasan 1MDB.

"Najib said he made formal and informal engagements with the Middle East countries, which gave positive response to matters related to the country's interests.

"He also told his ministers that Prince Sultan, through his foundation, agreed to give more donations to Yayasan 1MDB.

"However, he said the prince requested that his contribution be kept a secret," she said in her witness statement.

Mazidah, who is the 11th prosecution witness, was testifying in Najib's trial involving the misappropriation of RM2.28 billion of 1MDB funds.

She said Najib, who was then also the finance minister, informed everyone that Yayasan 1MDB could create more corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects.

"He said Yayasan 1MDB could engage in more CSR projects with the donation it received.

"He also asked the cabinet to propose their views on CSR projects that could be undertaken in October 2010," she said, adding that Najib asked the government to be more creative in finding other sources of funds to help the people.

On Sept 26, 2019, former 1MDB chief executive officer Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi testified that he received four cheques amounting to US\$100 mil-

lion, which was allegedly a donation from the Saudi royal family to the Yayasan 1MDB Trust Fund.

Shahrol said he received the cheques from fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho or Jho Low in September 2010.

However, the cheques were never cashed.

Shahrol also said the cheques were given to him during the time when 1MDB's US\$1 billion stake in a joint venture with PetroSaudi International Ltd (PSI) was being converted into an investment via loans to PSI.

Najib, 66, is facing four charges of having used his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.3 billion in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

The trial continues before High Court judge Colin Lawrence Sequerah today.



TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

4 civil servants claim trial to falsifying claims

KOTA KINABALU: Four civil servants claimed trial at the Special Corruption Court here yesterday to making false travel claims in 2017.

Mohd Aizat Rosland, Suaif Ag Daud, Razilah Sahad and Mohd Hanip Juarip pleaded not guilty when their charges, under Section 18 of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009 for intending to deceive the principal, were read before judge Abu Bakar Manat.

All the accused, who are attached to a federal government agency, were detained by the

MACC team on Wednesday.

Aizat was charged with two counts of falsifying travel allowance claims based on his two months of claims in 2017. The claims involved falsified hotel receipts amounting to RM740.

Suaif was charged with eight counts of falsifying hotel receipts amounting to RM3,621 based on his seven months of claims in 2017.

Razilah was also charged with eight counts of falsifying hotel receipts amounting to RM3,497 based on her seven months of claims in 2017.

Hanip was charged with six counts of falsifying hotel receipts amounting to RM1,473 based on his seven months of claims in 2017.

Abu Bakar granted bail with one surety to all four accused and ordered them to surrender their passports.

The court fixed RM15,000 bail for Suaif and Razilah, RM12,000 for Hanip and RM10,000 for Aizat. All four accused were also required to report to the MACC office every month.

MACC prosecuting officer Clement Severinus prosecuted.

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Sabah civil servant nabbed by MACC

KOTA KINABALU: A government training centre officer was arrested by graftbusters here for alleged abuse of power. The man, in his 40s, was detained at 12.15pm yesterday at the state Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office. He was suspected to have misused his position by giving several contracts worth RM36,000 to family members. Sabah MACC director Karunanithy Subbiah said the man had allegedly given contracts for supplying and repairing ICT equipment to family members.

New Straits Times Paper | 16 Februari 2021 | Page: 10

FALSE TRAVEL CLAIMS

Civil servants plead not guilty to deceiving Sabah anti-drug agency

KOTA KINABALU: Two government employees pleaded not guilty at the Special Corruption Court here yesterday to deceiving the Sabah National Anti-Drug Agency (Nada) by submitting false travel claims in 2017.

Erwan Roslan, 41, and Panduan Paglin, 40, claimed trial when the charges framed under Section 18 of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act were read before judge Abu Bakar Manat.

Both of the accused, who are

assistant officers attached to Sabah Nada, were each charged with six counts of deceiving the principal.

They allegedly committed the offences at the agency office at Wisma San Hin, Plaza Wawasan here, four years ago.

According to the charge sheets, Erwan had from Feb 28, 2017 to Nov 29, 2017 allegedly submitted falsified travel allowance claims involving several hotel receipts amounting to RM2,938.

As for Panduan, he was alleged



Sabah National Anti-Drug Agency employees, Panduan Paglin and Erwan Roslan, being led to the Special Corruption Court to be charged with deceiving the agency by submitting false travel claims in 2017. BERNAMA PIC

to have also submitted falsified travel allowance claims involving hotel receipts amounting to RM3,443 from March 1, 2017 to Dec 29, 2017.

The charge sheets also mentioned the documents contained false details, namely that the ac-

cusated incurred accommodation expenses when both had never stayed at the hotels concerned.

Abu Bakar granted RM10,000 bail with one surety to each accused and ordered them to surrender their passports as well as report to the MACC office once in

two months.

The court fixed April 7 for case management.

Prosecuting officer Rekhraj Singh appeared for the MACC, while Erwan and Panduan were represented by counsel Jamadi Salleh.

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APPLIED ON NOV 17 LAST YEAR

DEFENCE SEEKS INFO FROM U.S. COURTS

It includes names of 1MDB officials allegedly bribed by former partner of Goldman Sachs

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak's defence has applied to the United States (US) courts for the names of the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) officials who were bribed by a former partner of Goldman Sachs Group Inc in Asia.

Lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said this could help with the former prime minister's defence against the criminal charges over the misappropriation of RM2.28 billion in funds from 1MDB.

Shafee sought a postponement of the proceedings at the onset of the trial yesterday.

He said this was because of the

guilty plea of Goldman Sachs' Tim Leissner in helping to orchestrate the looting of billions of dollars from the sovereign wealth fund.

Shafee said the defence was seeking documents and testimony through the US courts for information on the alleged bribery of 1MDB officials by Leissner and Goldman Sachs.

"In the proceedings in the US, where Tim Leissner and Goldman Sachs pleaded guilty, Leissner admitted paying bribes to several officials in 1MDB.

"They admitted to the act of bribery and we have therefore filed a discovery application and asked Leissner and Goldman Sachs to reveal the names of those they bribed."

The application, which was made pursuant to the United States Code (USC), was filed on Nov 17 last year.

Shafee said the disclosure of the names was relevant to the defence's case to show that the witnesses lacked credibility and that they were, in fact, instruments of fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho or Jho Low.

He said the defence could also

show that Low, Leissner and Goldman Sachs had been working in tandem to penetrate and corrupt 1MDB, and using the money from the company for various purposes.

He said upon obtaining the relevant documents in the application, the defence planned to recall several witnesses, including former 1MDB chief executive officer (CEO) Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi to be cross-examined.

"This (discovery) is extremely relevant because I have asked Shahrol pertaining to why he simply followed what Jho Low said.

"Likewise, you will find quite a shocking revelation by (1MDB CEO Mohd) Hazem (Abdul Rahman) (current witness) because he was told that he must follow (instructions from Jho Low)."

All this, he said, would have bearing on whether all these characters had been receiving illicit payments.

Shafee also sought to defer the 1MDB trial as the defence desperately needed more time to prepare for the hearing of Najib's appeal against his conviction and



Lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah speaking to the media at the High Court yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

sentencing in the SRC International Sdn Bhd case at the Court of Appeal.

"We are supposed to put in our written submissions by March 1," Shafee said.

Meanwhile, deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib said the prosecution's concern was for the trial to go on and that the prosecution would not interfere with the application in the US as they were not a party to it.

"However, since the application in the US is important to the defence, we leave it to the court to

decide whether the trial should be adjourned or continued."

High Court judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah rejected the postponement application, but vacated the trial dates set in April. In rejecting the bid, Sequerah said the defence could recall any prosecution witness to be questioned again if there was a need or if there was any related information on the matter at the US court.

The trial then continued with the cross-examination of Hazem, the 10th prosecution witness.

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'DID NOT HOLD ANY POSITION IN 1MDB ARM'

Jho Low's associate 'was signatory of 1MDB subsidiary'



KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court yesterday heard that one of fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho's associates was an authorised signatory of a 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) subsidiary despite not holding any position in it.

This was revealed by 1MDB chief executive officer (CEO) Mohd Hazem Abdul Rahman, 49, during the trial of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak over the misappropriation of RM2.28 billion of 1MDB funds.

Hazem said in 1Malaysia Development Bhd Global Investment Limited (1MDB GIL), 1MDB chief financial officer Azmi Tahir and he were the appointed authorised signatories as they held the director's position in the 1MDB subsidiary.

During cross-examination by Najib's counsel, Wan Aizuddin Wan Mohammed, Hazem confirmed that apart from him and Azmi, former 1MDB executive director Terence Geh was also appointed as an authorised signatory for 1MDB GIL.

This was despite Geh not holding any position in 1MDB GIL.

Asked by Wan Aizuddin why Geh was appointed an authorised signatory in the company, Hazem said he had no idea.

Wan Aizuddin: Can you tell us again why Geh was appointed an authorised signatory despite not being a director of the company?

Hazem: I don't know the reason.

Wan Aizuddin: Do you agree that by right, as a member of management, the appointment of an authorised signatory will give him dominion over the company's property?

Hazem: Yes.

Wan Aizuddin: Shouldn't the board of directors be briefed first about his appointment (as the signatory)?

Hazem: I am not sure if the board should approve first in 1MDB GIL.

Hazem had, in his witness statement, said Geh was appointed by Low, or better known as Jho Low, as an authorised signatory to the account of 1MDB GIL.

The trial continues before High Court judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah today.

Najib, 68, is charged with 25 counts of abuse of power and money laundering involving RM2.28 billion of 1MDB funds, which were deposited into his accounts between 2011 and 2014. He faces 20 years' jail and fine if convicted.



1Malaysia Development Bhd chief executive officer Mohd Hazem Abdul Rahman (centre) arriving at the High Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY HAIRUL ANUAR RAHIM

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SYNDICATE

7 HELD OVER SALE OF REVENUE STAMPS, IMMIGRATION STICKERS

Sale of items during 3-year spree led to loss of RM15m in govt revenue

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THE Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) detained seven syndicate members involved in the sale of government revenue stamps and foreign workers' Temporary Working Visit Pass stickers, which resulted in losses of more than RM15 million in government revenue.

The seven, aged between 30 and 39, comprised four employees of a security printing company and three civilians.

Sources said 2,500 pieces of government revenue stamps, worth RM250 and RM10, bringing the overall total to RM12.5 million, were seized during a major operation in various parts of the city here on Wednesday night.

"Based on investigations, the RM250 government revenue stamp was sold in the black market for a mere RM40, while the RM10 government revenue stamp was sold for between RM5 and RM6," the source said.

"The government revenue stamps are usually used as stamp duties for sales and purchase agreements, which can be purchased at the post office or the

Inland Revenue Board (IRB) branches.

"Further investigations revealed that the syndicate is also involved in selling Temporary Working Visit Pass with security features for the use of the Immigration Department. Each pass is being sold to foreign workers in the black market for between RM700 and RM800."

The Temporary Working Visit Pass, issued by the Immigration Department according to the job sectors, is usually sold for between RM2,000 and RM3,000.

The source said the syndicate's modus operandi was to bribe the printing company workers to smuggle out the government revenue stamps and PLKS stickers from their storage before selling them on the black market

through the three civilians.

"The syndicate is believed to have been active for the last three years and have raked in millions of ringgit in profit," the source added.

MACC deputy chief commissioner (operations) Datuk Seri Ahmad Khusairi Yahaya when contacted confirmed the arrest.

He said the matter was being probed under Section 16 of the MACC Act 2009.

"We view this matter seriously as it resulted in losses due to leakage of government revenue," he said.

Intelligence and surveillance of the syndicate's activities had been carried out for the past six months following cooperation between the MACC and the Immigration Department.

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GLOBAL SETTLEMENT

AMMB TO PAY RM2.83B OVER 1MDB SCANDAL

Finance Ministry says AmBank Group has taken measures to address transaction lapses

KUALA LUMPUR

AMMB Holdings Bhd has reached a global settlement totalling RM2.83 billion on all outstanding claims and actions in relation to the AmBank Group's involvement in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandal.

Announcing this yesterday, the Finance Ministry in a statement said the AmBank Group had tak-

en comprehensive measures to address the lapses associated with these transactions.

These, it said, included measures under a remediation programme that Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) required the AmBank Group to implement, led by the new board and senior management team currently in place.

With these measures, the AmBank Group was well-placed to continue safeguarding depositors' funds and shareholders' interests, and its future growth, it said.

The ministry said the latest global settlement was part of the government's continuing recovery efforts on pursuing against all parties directly or indirectly involved in 1MDB and its related entities.

"This follows the government's successful negotiations on the Goldman Sachs' RM15.8 billion settlement in July last year.

"These settlements will not absolve other entities and individuals of their alleged wrongful involvement in 1MDB, and they will continue to be pursued through the criminal justice system," said the ministry.

The ministry added that the global settlement also addressed the Securities Commission's (SC) requirements on compliance with its laws and guidelines.

It said that as part of the terms for the global settlement, the SC would require AmInvestment Bank Bhd to take corrective measures, including putting in place systems and processes to strengthen its due diligence



According to the Finance Ministry, the amount is in addition to the RM53.7 million penalty already imposed by Bank Negara Malaysia and paid by the AmBank Group. FILE PIC

framework for submission of corporate proposals.

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz said the settlement was beneficial for Malaysians.

"Resolving this through the court system would have cost a lot of time, money and resources. With this settlement, the payment of the monies will be expedited, instead of being held up by lengthy court battles, and can be used to fulfil 1MDB's outstanding obligations," he said.

This settlement amount is in addition to the RM53.7 million penalty already imposed by BNM and paid by the AmBank Group.

The global settlement, read the statement, would not affect or compromise Malaysia's claims against individuals, such as fugitive financier Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, 1MDB's former general counsel Jasmine Loo, and other parties who are still being pursued in relation to the 1MDB scandal.

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BRIBES FROM DRUG TRAFFICKING SYNDICATES

Four, including three civil servants held to assist in graft probe

GEORGE TOWN: Four people, including three civil servants, have been detained by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) here to assist an investigation into a graft case.

The four detained included a 43-year-old Assistant Superintendent of Police, a 40-year-old Lance Corporal, an employee of the Penang Island City Council (MBPP), 36, and a 29-year-old civilian.

Sources said the four were detained on suspicion of receiving bribe money to protect and leak out information with regard to drug trafficking syndicates in the state for the past few years.

"Based on investigations, they have been receiving a sum of money every month.

"Altogether, they have been receiving about RM500,000 for the

past few years.

"Investigation into the case is still ongoing," the source said.

Earlier yesterday morning, the four were produced at the Magistrate's Court here for a remand order under Section 117 of the Criminal Procedure Code to assist the probe under Section 16(a)(B) of the MACC Act 2009.

The senior police officer and the MBPP employee were represented by counsel K. Kumaran while the two police personnel were represented by V. Muniandy.

The civilian was unrepresented.

Magistrate's Court deputy registrar Muhammad Azam Md Eusoff allowed the three civil servants to be remanded for two days until today, while the civilian will be on remand for four days until Monday.



Three civil servants and a civilian being taken to the Magistrate's Court in George Town yesterday for a remand order. PIC BY DANIAL SAAD