

**NEWS PAPER CUTTING ON SEPTEMBER 2021**  
**NEWS STRAIT TIMES**

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## Immigration officer fined RM50,000 for taking RM15,000 bribe



Yusrazif Wan Yusoh

**KUALA LUMPUR:** An Immigration officer was fined RM50,000 in default of five months' jail for accepting RM15,000 in bribes to free foreigners who had committed immigration offences.

Judge Suzana Hussin meted out the sentence against Yusrazif Wan Yusoh, 41, after he changed his plea to guilty yesterday.

On Jan 21, the father of four was brought to the same court to face five counts of accepting kickbacks from Yuen Hon Loong and Voon Pot Lim, both of whom were related to the accused's of-

ficial duty.

The bribes were in relation to the immigration clearance of Filipino and Chinese nationals through the immigration counter at the departure hall of Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (klia 2).

The offences under Section 165 of the Penal Code carry a maximum two years' jail or a fine or both, upon conviction.

Counsel Azrul Zulkifli Stork, during mitigation, said his client was remorseful.

"He was among two Immigra-

tion officers who assisted the department and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to cripple the fake passport syndicate.

"He is his family's sole breadwinner and also suffers from diabetes and kidney disease."

Deputy public prosecutor Mohd Shahrom Idris pressed for a deterrent sentence.

"This case involves public interest and is a systematic crime."

According to the facts of the case, Yuen would send to Yusrazif a list of Chinese nationals who

were detained by the Immigration Department.

He would facilitate the release of the detainees and their process at the immigration counter to enable them to return to their homeland.

It was reported that 65 people — 39 Immigration officers, 17 agents and nine civilians — were arrested in Op Selat last year.

Op Selat was mounted based on intelligence and surveillance at entry points, especially at KLIA, klia 2 and Bangunan Sultan Ismail Johor Baru.

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32 CHEQUES HAD STAMPED SIGNATURES

## ZAHID'S LAWYER PINS BLAME ON EX-SECRETARY

She had full control, custody of cheque books and assumed blanket approval in issuing them, lawyer says in submission

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**U**MNO President Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday washed his hands off all blame for misusing his charity foundation's money to pay for his credit card charges.

Instead, his lawyer pointed the finger at the former deputy prime minister's executive secretary Major Mazlina Mazlan and accused her of being the main culprit behind the mess her former boss was entangled in now.

Zahid's lawyer, Hamidi Mohd Noh, did not mince his words in describing Mazlina, who was a key prosecution witness in Zahid's corruption trial, as a hopelessly incompetent, careless and negligent individual.

He said Mazlina, who managed the financial affairs of Zahid's charity foundation Yayasan Akalbudi, often made countless errors via overpayments and underpayments from the foundation's accounts.

"It is absolutely beyond doubt that Mazlina was totally incompetent in the discharge of her duties. She alone was responsible and the accused, under the circumstances, should be acquitted and discharged," Hamidi said in his submission at the end of the prosecution's case against Zahid.

Hamidi, who tackled the 12 criminal breach of trust (CBT) charges his client was facing involving Yayasan Akalbudi funds, noted that Zahid had been accused of dishonestly making payments to different banks for his credit card charges.

Such payments included RM534,412.52, RM30,771.19, RM107,509.55, RM708,134.47, RM3,914.84, RM30,635.80 and RM54,168.89, which were made between January 2014 and January 2016, when Zahid was a trustee of the foundation and the sole signatory of its bank account. Hamidi said the 12 CBT charges



Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi arriving at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex for the Yayasan Akalbudi trial yesterday. PIC BY EZAHRI SHAMSUDDIN

his client faced involved 52 cheques, of which 44 were related to credit card payments.

However, he argued that the cheques included 32 which did not carry the hand-written signatures of the accused, but were instead stamped (with Zahid's signature).

The lawyer contended that it was Mazlina who had full control and custody of all cheque books belonging to the foundation, and also that of Zahid, as she managed his personal affairs.

"She was the only one with the sole possession, control and custody of the cheques."

"She was the only one who held the keys to the drawer where the cheques were kept... even the accused did not have the keys," Hamidi said, adding that it was safe to infer that his client did not prepare the cheques himself.

The accused, he argued, should not be criminally held liable as it wasn't him who put the stamped signatures on the cheques.

At this point High Court judge

Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah interrupted Hamidi and pointed out to the lawyer that Mazlina had testified that Zahid gave his consent for her to issue the cheques.

Hamidi, however, said Mazlina had assumed it was a blanket approval.

"On the issue of permission, she agreed during cross-examination that she presumed, or assumed, on her personal account that such permission was a blanket approval from my client."

**Collins:** How about the spot checks she said the accused conducted twice a year and the fact that the accused never complained?

**Hamidi:** He never complained because he did not know. But there was no arahan (instruction).

Hamidi then argued that Mazlina's evidence was riddled with admissions of errors and neglect in the discharge of her duties.

On the issue of the bank clearing the stamped cheques, Hamidi said the prosecution failed to provide any proof of the foundation authorising the bank to clear its cheques with stamped signatures. "Passing a cheque with a

stamped signature is something out of the ordinary and a prudent banker would definitely want a proper authorisation from the account holder.

"It is no surprise that a witness from the bank admitted that they had been negligent and wrong to have cleared these cheques."

On the issue of pre-signed cheques used to pay for Zahid's credit card expenses, Hamidi said it was Mazlina who had done it without consent from the accused.

The defence will continue with its submissions today.

Zahid, 68, is facing 47 charges, including 12 for CBT, eight for corruption and 27 for money laundering involving RM31 million of Yayasan Akalbudi funds.

For the 12 CBT charges, Zahid is alleged to have used the funds to make payments for personal credit cards, insurance policies and licenses for his personal vehicles, remittances to a law firm and contributions to the Royal Malaysian police football association. The charge, under Section 409 of the Penal Code, carries a maximum 20 years' jail, whipping and fine.



THREE COUNTS

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## Big Blue Taxi Services founder charged with graft

**SHAH ALAM:** Big Blue Taxi Services founder Datuk Shamsubahrin Ismail was yesterday slapped with three counts of soliciting and accepting RM85,000 as graft.

Shamsubahrin, who is wheelchair-bound, pleaded not guilty when the charges were read to him before Sessions Court judge Rozilah Salleh.

The 55-year-old businessman was accused of soliciting RM15,000 from Azizan Mohamed Yassin as an inducement to help resolve the latter's corruption

case at the Court of Appeal.

He was also charged with accepting RM35,000 in two stages from the same person and for the same reason.

He was alleged to have committed the offences at Jalan Perindustrian Suntracks in Bangi, Bandar Teknologi Kajang in Semenyih, and Seksyen U8 in Bukit Jelutong between March 3 and March 10 this year.

The offences fall under Section 16(a)(A) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009, which carries a 20

years' jail sentence and a fine of up to five times the value of the bribe, or RM10,000, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

MACC deputy public prosecutor Fadhli Ab Wahab asked the court to impose RM50,000 bail with one surety against the father of five.

However, counsel Sharuddin Ali pleaded for minimum bail, stating that his client had given full cooperation during the investigation.

The court set bail at RM40,000 with one surety and fixed Oct 8 for case mention.



Datuk Shamsubahrin Ismail being wheeled into the Shah Alam Sessions Court yesterday. PIC BY FAIZ ANUAR

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## ACCUSED CHANGES PLEA

# Ex-MPOB admin officer fined RM5,000 for corruption

**IPOH:** A former administrative officer of the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) was fined RM5,000 by the Sessions Court here yesterday for corruption.

Judge S. Indra Nehru meted out the fine on Selamat Mulyono Juni, 37, who changed his not guilty plea to guilty when the case came up for mention yesterday.

He paid the fine.

Selamat Mulyono was charged with corruptly obtaining gratification of RM1,500 for himself from one Shafrullah Abu Kasim as an inducement for him to not take action against a company, Khaffa Vision Enterprise, which continued to carry out oil palm trading despite its Dealer Fruit licence issued by MPOB having expired.

He was charged with committing the offence at a restaurant in Parit Buntar at 6.35pm on Oct 20 last year.



*Former administrative officer of the Malaysian Palm Oil Board Selamat Mulyono Juni (right) at the Sessions Court in Ipoh yesterday. BERNAMA PIC*

The charge was framed under Section 165 of the Penal Code, which provides for imprisonment of up to two years, or a fine, or both, upon conviction.

Prior to this, Selamat Mulyono was also charged with soliciting RM6,000 from the same man as an inducement to destroy evidence on the alleged offence by the company, but this was taken into consideration by the court in accordance with Section 171A of the Criminal Procedure Code.

The prosecution was conducted by deputy public prosecutor Maziyah Mansor, while the accused was represented by lawyer Siti Salwani Md Shah. **Bernama**

GUAN ENG'S GRAFT TRIAL

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## Businessmen linked to undersea tunnel project 'really good friends'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The corruption trial involving Lim Guan Eng yesterday heard how two businessmen linked to the undersea tunnel project had exchanged a series of WhatsApp messages about arranging a late night meeting with the former Penang chief minister.

The text messages between Beijing Urban Construction Group (BUCG) managing director Datuk Zarul Ahmad Mohd Zulkifli and controversial businessman G. Gnanaraja included one which read: "Superb sir, I bring you chocolates Eastin."

The messages, the court heard, showed close ties between the duo, as they often referred to each other as "brother" and exchanged pleasantries like, "I love you" and "You are my dearest, dearest, dearest friend".

Ironically, Gnanaraja, who is well known as Datuk Seri G, or DSG, has since been charged with cheating Zarul and had his title revoked by the Pahang Palace in 2019.

The 38-year-old has claimed trial to three counts of cheating Zarul in relation to the undersea tunnel project.

He was accused of deceiving Zarul into paying him RM19 million between July and August 2017.

Gnanaraja allegedly promised Zarul to use his connections to help settle an ongoing Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) probe into the consortium, which was the main contractor for the RM6.34 billion project.

Gnanaraja allegedly deceived Zarul into giving him RM2 mil-

lion in cash in July and August 2017 at Eastin Hotel in Petaling Jaya.

He is also accused of cheating Zarul of RM15 million on July 27, 2017, at the CIMB Bank branch at the Petronas Twin Towers here.

At the trial yesterday, MACC Forensics Department's investigation officer, Wan Firdaus Wan Yusof, testified that he had conducted a forensics test on Gnanaraja's mobile phone to extract the exchange of messages between the duo.

He read out several of the messages in which the duo planned a meeting with Lim at Gnanaraja's house.

When questioned by deputy public prosecutor Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin, Firdaus said none of the messages showed any plan by the duo to

fix Lim.

He confirmed that they also never talked about giving money to Lim.

When cross-examined by Lim's lead counsel, Gobind Singh Deo, Firdaus referred to another message which Gnanaraja had sent to Zarul which read: "I love you, Datuk. You are constantly on my mind. I will finish off anyone who disturbs you."

**Gobind:** This shows they were really good friends.

**Firdaus:** Yes.

**Gobind:** But after all this, Gnanaraja was charged with cheating Zarul.

**Firdaus:** I am not sure.

**Gobind:** This case was taken up by MACC. You don't know that Gnanaraja was charged?

**Firdaus:** I am not sure.

The trial before Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi will continue on Nov 1.

The court was also informed that the prosecution was expected to call former tourism minister Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz to testify on Nov 5.

Lim is facing four charges of using his position as the then chief minister to solicit gratification to help Consortium Zenith Construction to secure the undersea tunnel project.

He allegedly sought 10 per cent of the profit to be made by the company from its owner, Zarul.

He is also accused of receiving RM3.3 million for himself and causing two plots of land belonging to the state government to be disposed of to two companies linked to the tunnel project.

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DISPUTE OVER RM9 MILLION FEE

# SOLAR HYBRID PROJECT ROW: TRIAL NEXT YEAR

Rayyan Radzwil  
Abdullah and his  
ex-business partner  
to have case heard  
on Dec 8, 2022

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Saidi Abang Samsudin

**T**HE High Court has fixed Dec 8 next year to hear the legal dispute relating to the solar hybrid project between businessman Rayyan Radzwil Abdullah and his former business partner from Jepak Holdings Sdn Bhd Saidi Abang Samsudin.

Lawyer Ravee G. Uthirapathy, who represented Rayyan, said judge Datuk Ahmad Bache fixed the date during online proceedings yesterday.

"The judge also ordered all parties to submit their witness statements," he said.

Rayyan, who helped the company secure a solar hybrid project for 369 rural schools in Sarawak, had filed a lawsuit against Saidi over allegations that his business partner had failed to pay the remaining RM9 million for services rendered to obtain the project.

On Jan 13, the same court rejected Rayyan's application for the case to be decided by way of a summary judgment without hav-

ing to go to trial.

Ahmad, in his decision, said there were triable issues in the case and the defendant (Saidi) should be allowed to defend himself in a full trial.

The judge also said that it was not safe to decide the case summarily without a full trial considering the circumstances surrounding the case and the huge amount of claim sought.

On Feb 29 last year, Rayyan filed the suit claiming that in early 2016, Saidi had appointed him as an adviser to obtain and prepare working papers for the hybrid solar project and, in return, promised to pay a fee of RM10 million when the defendant was successful in securing the project.

In his statement of claim, Rayyan claimed that on Dec 10, 2016, the defendant successfully obtained the project with a gross value of RM1.25 billion from the Ministry of Education Malaysia

(MoE) as a result of the efforts and work done by the plaintiff.

According to him, on Aug 10, 2017, the defendant had paid RM1 million to him and until now the remaining payment of RM9 million was still outstanding and had not been paid by the defendant.

Therefore, the plaintiff demanded the remaining payment of RM9 million, damages of RM20 million due to loss of investment opportunities, general damages, benefits and costs.

Saidi, in his defence statement on April 6, denied he had appointed Rayyan as an adviser to obtain and prepare working papers for the hybrid solar project, apart from claiming that the agreement for the project was entered into between Jepak Holdings and MoE and not in the defendant's private capacity. Saidi also filed a counter-claim against Rayyan, demanding he return the RM1 million paid to him immediately.

Rayyan and Saidi were both prosecution witnesses in the trial of Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, the wife of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, involving the solar hybrid project.

Rosmah, 70, is facing a charge of soliciting RM187.5 million and two counts of receiving a total of RM6.5 million as bribe from Saidi, through her former aide Datuk Rizal Mansor, in exchange for helping Jepak Holdings obtain a RM1.25 billion project to provide solar energy to schools in Sarawak.

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# 'TAKE ACTION'

THE 2019 Series 2 Auditor-General's Report has revealed millions of ringgit in wastage, leakages and improper payments, with 10 govt projects failing to achieve objectives. Three of them alone resulted in a wastage of RM285.04m. Calls have been made for a thorough investigation and punitive action.

**OTHER A-G REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Customs Department had highest amount of leakages at RM272.99m and RM64.89m in improper payments.
- RM29.92m in leakages seen for Open AP Vehicle management and hospital medical equipment management.
- Medical equipment over 20 years old, classified as Beyond Economic Repair, still being used in hospitals.

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PHOTO BY STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

2019 SERIES 2 AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

## CUSTOMS DEPT HAD RM272m IN 'LEAKAGES'

After 8 years and a total of RM397 million spent, the uCustoms system remains unfinished

KUALA LUMPUR  
AND JOHORE  
KUALA LUMPUR  
BY THE STRAITS TIMES

**T**HE Customs Department has been singled out for having recorded the highest amount of wastage and improper payments under the 2019 Series 2 Auditor-General's Report (AG Report).

Auditor-General Derek Nis Arman Nis Abdul Khalid said the Customs Department recorded RM272.99 million in leakages and RM64.89 million in improper payments.

"On leakages, the Customs Department topped the list with RM272.99 million, followed by the Putrajaya Selangor Raw Water Transfer Project with RM126 million and Integrated telecommunications network services with RM4.89 million.

"A total of RM397.04 million was recorded in improper payments, with the Customs Department

topping the list with RM272.99 million," he said at a press conference with the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in Parliament yesterday.

Leakages refers to the fact that payment has been made but the projects have not yet been completed, which constitutes wastage.

Improper payments, meanwhile, denotes payments made without supporting documents. A total of 27 performance audits of RM90.620 billion were carried out under the 2019 Series 2 AG Report for programmes, activities and projects of 13 ministries.

Nis Arman said the leakage in the Customs Department is related to uCustoms system, valued at RM245.43 million.

It has yet to be completed despite being started eight years ago in October 2013.

He said the government had paid RM272.99 million to the company involved.

"The uCustoms system has failed to be implemented despite a large sum of money being paid. Extensions were also given five times but it remains incomplete until today," he said.

Nis Arman said leakages were also detected in the Open Approved Permit management for vehicles under the International Trade and Industry Ministry involving RM28.06 million.

He said another leakage report

ed was on the management of hospital medical equipment, where some weaknesses were detected.

"Overall, all projects were far from being in a good manner except for certain weaknesses as mentioned," he said.

PAC chairman Wong Kah Wei (DAP-Johor Bharu) said the government would commission the Finance Ministry and Customs Department to explain the leakages detected from the uCustoms system.

"The minister views seriously the increase in punitive action taken in the 2019 Series 2 AG Report compared with Series 1, which only recorded 11 punitive action items.

"The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) should be more aggressive and take seriously the issues listed in the report."

PAC urges MACC to conduct an immediate investigation into all issues categorised as punitive," Wong said.

Other projects that failed to meet objectives and outcomes were the Quarterly radiotherapy in Putrajaya, Malaysia's electoral system, myKad as home, Malaysia My 2nd Home programme, Kuala Lumpur City Plan 2020, Putrajaya Selangor Raw Water Transfer project, Langat Water Treatment Plant project and Phase 1 Distribution System, Sub



of Water and Public Cleaning management and Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes.

The report also identified four management weaknesses in managing programmes and projects, namely in contract enforcement and monitoring, delays in loan collection and savings in revenue, delays in signing contracts, and weaknesses in planning and lack of methods in streamlining the outcomes.