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BUKIT JALIL NATIONAL STADIUM

'FIELD IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE LOOKS BETTER'

Water-logged pitch at stadium has netizens questioning management's upgrading work

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VIDEOS of Bukit Jalil National Stadium personnel using dustpans and brooms to sweep away water from the football pitch before the AFC Asian Cup 2023 qualifier match between Malaysia and Bahrain on Saturday night have invited scorn and ridicule from fans.

The rain-soaked pitch, which left both teams having to lob the ball as it would become stuck in the water otherwise, have left many questioning the upgrading

work at the national stadium.

Malaysia lost 1-2 to Bahrain. Twitter user @skumar176 said he was taken aback to see the water-logged pitch.

He said the main objective of the upgrading work was to improve the quality of the pitch as it could not be used on rainy days.

"After tonnes of money spent on upgrading work some time ago, we still have a 'Padang Banjir' at our national stadium."

Instagram user Alfayad was among the spectators who packed the national stadium on Saturday in anticipation of a fast-flowing game. He was instead treated to a choppy match.

"The condition of the field was bad, there was stagnant water due to an inefficient drainage system," he wrote.

Facebook user Azri also lamented how the millions of ringgit spent on upgrading had failed to produce the desired results.

"Football is one of the most

popular sports in our country that get a lot of attention and funding. But after millions of ringgit spent on maintenance, our facilities and infrastructure are still in an embarrassing state.

"The question is, where did all the money go to?"

Instagram user Holydane said the match looked like it was played on a school field.

"It's really embarrassing. It looked as if the players were having a match on a school field. How are we supposed to win when there is no spirit to play on a pitch like this?"

Twitter user @dk_derick72 believed that it was time the people had a say on how projects were approved.

"It looks like every project has become exponentially expensive. I suggest that all projects and procurements by the government be evaluated and approved by a committee comprising the people"

Twitter user @leenarashid



A staff member of Bukit Jalil National Stadium using a broom to sweep away water from the football pitch before the AFC Asian Cup 2023 qualifier match between Malaysia and Bahrain on Saturday night. PIC BY ASWADI ALIAS

pulled no punches in slamming the pitch's condition.

"The field in front of my house is better than our national stadium."

Johor Crown Prince Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim had, in March, agreed to sponsor "Zeon Zoysia" grass, as well as better drainage system for the Bukit Jalil National Stadium.

The "Zeon Zoysia" grass is the type used at Sultan Ibrahim Sta-

dium, the homeground of the Johor Darul Ta'zim football team.

Sultan Ibrahim Stadium's technical team projected that it would take around four months to install a new pitch.

However, it is understood that the Bukit Jalil Stadium management had asked for the pitch relaying work to start only in January as the stadium has been fully booked for events this whole year.

BASED ON SECTORS

New ID system to stop foreign workers from switching jobs

TAPAH: The Human Resources Ministry will introduce a new sector-based identity card system to address the problem of foreign workers switching to other sectors arbitrarily.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri M. Saravanan said the high demand in the plantation sector following an increase in palm oil prices saw plantation owners paying more.

"This has caused some workers to switch to the sector, so we are trying to resolve this problem," he said after officiating at the Perak Jaminkerja Keluarga Malaysia Career Carnival 2022 at the Tapah Youth and Sports Complex here yesterday.

He said the new sector-based identity card system would also ensure that employers did not misuse their employees' registration.

"Another problem is that the levy rate for the agricultural sector is cheaper. So many employers, even those from different

sectors, bring in foreign workers through the agricultural channel.

"By introducing this sector-based identity card system, we can address this issue and also assist the enforcement efforts of the authorities, especially the Immigration Department and the Royal Malaysia Police."

On Friday, Senior Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof was reported to have said the increase in palm oil prices in the plantation sector had attracted workers from other sectors and that it had caused a labour shortage in the construction sector.

Fadillah said the shortage caused delays in completing construction projects, including the Pan-Borneo Highway project.

Meanwhile, on the issue of delays in the entry of foreign workers into the country, Saravanan said he was confident that it would be resolved by the end of this month.

He urged employers to be pa-



Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri M. Saravanan (in red shirt) speaking to visitors after officiating at the Perak Jaminkerja Keluarga Malaysia Career Carnival 2022 at the Tapah Youth and Sports Complex yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

tient as the process of hiring foreign workers was time-consuming.

"I am concerned that many do not understand the process of hiring foreign workers. Employers could only start applying (for workers) after the reopening of the country's borders on April 1."

Bernama

	SUBUH	SYURUK	ZUHUR	ASAR	MAGRIB	ISYAK
Melaka	5:50	7:04	1:14	4:39	7:20	8:36
Penang	5:51	7:04	1:21	4:47	7:33	8:49
K. Lumpur	5:51	7:03	1:16	4:42	7:25	8:41
Johor Baru	5:45	6:59	1:07	4:33	7:13	8:28
Kuantan	5:45	6:59	1:10	4:36	7:18	8:34
Ipoh	5:51	7:02	1:19	4:45	7:29	8:45

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RM589,450 BRIBE TO GO TO TREASURY

Bitcoin miner fined for paying bribes to cover up illegal activity

ALOR STAR: The Sessions Court here fined a rubber wholesaler RM250,000 after he admitted to a charge of paying over half a million ringgit in bribes to cover up his illegal cryptocurrency mining operation.

Judge Harmi Thamri Mohamad passed down the sentence on Th'ng Kean Kai, 33, after he pleaded guilty to the charge filed under Section 214 of the Penal Code.

The charge carries up to 10 years' imprisonment or with a fine, or both upon conviction.

The father of two had paid RM589,450 in bribes to an undercover Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) officer.

The bribe was paid as an inducement not to prosecute him, after the accused was caught stealing electricity to carry out illegal bitcoin mining activity.

In February last year, Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) and MACC had detected an electricity theft for illegal cryptocurrency mining activity.

TNB had informed MACC that the person behind the activity was willing to offer a bribe to its staff to cover up the activity.

Acting on the information, an officer with MACC was placed undercover in the TNB's special unit dealing with electricity theft.

The accused had subsequently set up the first meeting with the undercover MACC officer at Emerald Putri Hotel in Sungai Petani on Aug 26, 2021, where he paid RM42,000 as a bribe.

The next day, the accused paid another RM28,000 cash as a bribe to the undercover officer at the same hotel.

Th'ng admitted that he paid the bribes in four other separate occasions between Sept 29, 2021, and Feb 28, 2022, in Sungai Petani.

During the separate meetings, he had paid RM87,600; RM121,250; and RM215,800 with the last payment worth RM94,800 made to the officer on Feb 28, 2022.

Lawyer Tengku Hezrul Anuar Tengku Abdul Samad, who represented the accused pleaded for leniency as it was his client's first offence.

"The accused is the sole breadwinner for his family. He has two young children and is also supporting his father who suffers from diabetes and hypertension.



Th'ng Kean Kai arriving at the Alor Star Sessions Court yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

"My client has been cooperative since he was detained. He is fully remorseful and pledged not to get involved in such activities ever again."

MACC deputy public prosecu-

tor Ahmad Akram Gharib who appeared for prosecution, urged the court to impose a hefty sentence as a lesson to the accused, as well as the public.

Judge Harmi Thamri passed

down a fine of RM250,000 on the accused.

The court also ordered for the RM589,450 bribe paid by the accused to be surrendered to the National Treasury.

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Former Sabah
minister
jailed 3
years, fined
RM50,000 for
using false
documents

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EX-SABAH MINISTER

PETER ANTHONY GETS 3 YEARS' JAIL, RM50,000 FINE

Court finds him
guilty of using fake
documents relating
to a maintenance
contract 9 years ago

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FORMER Sabah Infrastructure Development minister Datuk Peter Anthony, 51, has been sentenced to three years' jail and a RM50,000 fine after he was found guilty of using false documents relating to a system maintenance contract nine years ago.

Sessions Court judge Azura Al-

wi sentenced Peter after ruling that the prosecution had proven its case beyond all reasonable doubt against the accused.

She ordered the sentence to run from yesterday.

Peter would have to serve 15 more months if he failed to pay the fine.

Azura, in her judgment, said Anthony's defence was inconsistent, a bare denial and an afterthought.

"There is circumstantial evidence and testimonies from witnesses to show that you (Peter) were the only one who had the opportunity to falsify the documents," she said.

She added that Syarikat Asli Jati, owned by the accused, had gained from the forgery as the letter used received the support from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) for the contract.



Former Sabah Infrastructure Development minister Datuk Peter Anthony (second from left) entering the Sessions Court in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

"This resulted in the Finance Ministry awarding it the contract through direct negotiations for five years," she said.

Peter's counsel S. Devanandan, when pleading for a minimum sentence, said his client was a prominent politician and contributed a lot to Sabahans.

"My client had given his full cooperation during the investigation and attended every proceeding without fail," he said.

Devanandan applied for a stay of execution on Peter's jail sentence pending appeal.

However, deputy public prosecutor Datuk Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin objected to it as Peter did not have any special circum-

stance.

Azura later granted Peter a stay of execution pending his appeal to the High Court.

She, however, ordered him to pay the fine, which must be made yesterday.

Peter, the managing director of Asli Jati Engineering Sdn Bhd, was accused of using a forged letter from UMS deputy vice-chancellor's office with the intention of deceiving the office of the principal private secretary to the prime minister.

The document was in regards to a purported collaboration with UMS to fund and set up a mechanical and electrical technical training centre via direct nego-

tiation in July 2014.

He committed the offence at the Perdana Putra Building in Putrajaya between June 13, 2014, and Aug 21, 2014.

The Parti Warisan Sabah vice-president was also charged with an alternative count of using a false document as genuine, namely a letter from the office of the deputy vice-chancellor of UMS dated June 9, 2014, which had a false statement in the title of the letter.

The charge under Section 471 of the Penal Code is punishable under Section 465, which carries a jail term of up to two years or a fine, or both, if convicted.

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MACC nabs 2 health officers in crackdown on funeral services cartel

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FUNERAL SERVICES CARTEL?

2 HEALTH OFFICERS HELD OVER ALLEGED GRAFT

They allegedly raked in RM15,000 each between 2018 and 2021 for funeral arrangement services

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TWO assistant health officers were nabbed yesterday in an ongoing crackdown by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Com-

mission (MACC) against cartel soliciting and accepting bribes for funeral arrangement services.

The suspects, aged 40 and 42, were arrested at the Selangor MACC headquarters at 4.45pm on Thursday when they arrived to have their statements recorded.

It is learnt that the suspects, who are attached to a hospital in the state, allegedly solicited and accepted RM300 in kickbacks for each funeral arrangement.

It is also learnt that the suspects raked in RM15,000 each in kickbacks between 2018 and last year.

Both suspects have been remanded for five days to assist

with investigations, which are being carried out under Section 17(a) of the MACC Act 2009.

The remand order until May 31 was issued by magistrate Nur Faizah Abdul Sani when the suspects were produced at the magistrate's court here yesterday.

It was reported that five employees from another hospital in the state were arrested by MACC in October last year on suspicion of soliciting and accepting bribes from agents for funeral services.

Bernama quoted an MACC source as saying that the activities were believed to have been carried out between 2019 and last year with bribes totalling more than RM20,000.

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Land swapped for
Penang tunnel
project study valued
at RM80m, court told

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LIM GUAN ENG CORRUPTION TRIAL

LAND SWAP VALUED AT RM80M

Valuation officers
agree state govt did
not suffer losses in
deal to study
Penang tunnel

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THE two plots of state land swapped to offset the cost of a feasibility study for the Penang undersea tunnel were valued at a total of RM80 million.

Witnesses testifying in former Penang chief minister Lim Guan Eng's corruption trial said Lot 702 and Lot 713 in Bandar Tanjung Pinang on the island were valued at RM50 million and RM30 million respectively.

Both lots were signed away by Lim to the developer of the tunnel project and later used for the City of Dreams project by the Ewein Zenith Group.

The first witness to be called yesterday, valuation officer Zakariya Nayan, 55, said he valued Lot 702 in December 2014 based on the then market value of RM3,360 per sq m.

The second witness, Nurul Asshima Aminullah, 33, said she valued Lot 713 at RM30 million in 2016.

When cross-examined by Lim's lawyer Haijan Omar, Zakariya agreed that the value of the land was far less than the cost of work by the developer, which was estimated to be around RM138 million.



Lim Guan Eng's lawyers Gobind Singh Deo (left) and Haijan Omar at the Kuala Lumpur court complex yesterday. PIC BY FATHIL ASRI

Nurul Asshima also agreed with the lawyer's suggestion that the value of Lot 713 was less than the RM73 million spent by the developer on the project.

Both witnesses agreed that based on this, the state government did not suffer any losses in the land swap deal.

It was reported that Ewein Zenith, headed by the late Datuk Ewe Swee Kheng, had developed the billion-ringggit City of Dreams on the plots of reclaimed land.

Ewein Zenith is a joint venture vehicle between Ewein Land Sdn Bhd and CZBUCG Sdn Bhd. The freehold 1.49ha City of Dreams is

opposite the strategically located Gurney Drive. It comprises 572 luxury seafront serviced apartments in a 39-storey twin tower. Apartments are priced upwards of RM1,500 per sq feet.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) had detained top executives from the company in its probe into the tunnel project.

The MACC was investigating why Lim's state government had pre-sold state land rights worth RM3 billion despite a four-year delay in the construction of roads, which were part of the tunnel project.

Lim, who is DAP chairman, is accused of soliciting a 10 per cent cut in profits from the tunnel project from Consortium Zenith Construction managing director Datuk Zarul Ahmad Mohd Zulkefli.

He is also accused of seeking RM3.3 million in kickbacks to appoint Zarul's company to undertake the project.

He also faces two counts of dishonestly misappropriating RM208.7 million of state land to two companies.

The trial before Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi continues on June 7.