

## The Star February 2017

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## 1. MACC questions Annuar Musa for four hours

PUTRAJAYA: Tan Sri Annuar Musa spent four hours at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) as investigators questioned the suspended Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) chairman over allegations of abuse of power and misappropriation of funds.

Annuar, who is also Ketereh MP, was all smiles when he emerged from the MACC headquarters at 1pm where a media scrum had waited for him since 8am.

"I came here as I felt dutybound and I gave assistance, to the best of my abilities, to the MACC.

"Whatever they had to ask, I answered them. So it's now up to them if they find a case or not," said Annuar.

He said the questions revolved around Kelantan Football Association (Kafa) spending.

When asked if he could be called up again by the MACC, Annuar, who was former Kafa chairman, said it was possible and he was ready to cooperate.

"I am ready anytime, if they need to question me further," he said.

The Umno information chief, however, said there was no rush to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is also the Umno president, over his party position.

"This has got nothing to do with the PM or the party. This is my case with the MACC, so let me manage this myself," he said.

He also said the case would not affect his bid for the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) presidency, as it is still at the investigation stage.

"There are several criteria that disqualify you from contesting the FAM presidency, including bankruptcy. Being investigated by MACC, however, is not one of them," he added.

Mara announced the immediate suspension of Annuar as chairman of Mara and its subsidiary Pelaburan Mara Bhd (PMB) on Tuesday.

The unanimous decision was made at a special meeting of the Mara Council.

Council member Datuk Dr Yusof Yakob, who chaired the meeting, said Annuar's temporary removal would remain in effect pending the findings of an internal audit.

The MACC also announced that it would call Annuar to record his statement.

On Tuesday, Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said he was informed that the Mara Council held a special meeting to pave the way for an internal audit into the Kafa sponsorship as well as other issues that have been going viral on social media.

## 2. Annuar's priority is to meet MACC on Friday

PETALING JAYA: Tan Sri Annuar Musa says his first priority when he flies back from New Zealand will be to meet the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) on Friday morning.

Annuar, who is expected to return to Kuala Lumpur on Thursday night, says he will meet the MACC over investigations related to Mara's sponsorship of the Kelantan Football Association (Kafa).

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The MACC also announced that it would call Annuar to record his statement on allegations of power abuse and misappropriation.

According to Annuar, he was obliged to extend his cooperation to the commission and that he respected its duties.

Annuar, who was former Kafa chairman, also thanked Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak for stating that he would remain party information chief for now.

"I have my own opinion on this and God willing, I will meet the Umno president later. But for now, MACC will be first," he said in a Facebook post on Wednesday night.

"The 10-hour journey will be tiring but I will be delighted to come home and meet my grandchildren, my media friends and others where contact has been limited because of the distance.

"Whatever it is, I hope to be at the MACC office before they open so that they have enough time to do their duty," he added.

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### **3. MACC: Annuar Musa gave his full cooperation**

PETALING JAYA: Suspended Mara chairman Tan Sri Annuar Musa is giving his full cooperation to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

"He arrived at the office voluntarily this morning and has given his full cooperation to the investigating team," said MACC in a statement on Friday.

It said to date, the commission has recorded statements of more than five individuals in connection with MACC investigations into the allegations against Annuar.

The commission also called on all parties not to speculate on the investigation and to let the agency investigate the matter.

Earlier, Annuar, who is also Ketereh MP, spent four hours at the MACC headquarters and was questioned about the Kelantan Football Association (Kafa) spending.

The Umno information chief had stated on Facebook that his first priority would be to meet the MACC on his return from New Zealand.

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#### 4. Primary school headmaster gets eight months' jail



Sent to jail: Subramaniam being led away after his sentencing at the Sessions Court in Shah Alam.  
— Bernama

SHAH ALAM: A primary school headmaster has been sentenced to eight months' jail for taking bribes to extend the school's canteen operator's contract three years ago.

M. Subramaniam, 56, was found guilty of two charges of accepting RM4,400 from the canteen operator to extend his contract when he was the headmaster of SKJ(T) Rawang.

He was first charged with accepting a RM1,500 cheque from K. Devega on Jan 30, 2014, at the school canteen in exchange for his endorsement letter to extend the contract.

He was also charged with accepting another cheque for RM2,900 from Devega on Oct 8, 2014, at the same place and for the same purpose.

Sessions Court judge Asmadi Hussin said the defence had failed to raise reasonable doubt against the prosecution's case.

During mitigation, Subramaniam's counsel M. Athimulan pleaded for a lighter punishment, saying that his client had used the money to better the school.

He also said it was his client's first offence and he has three school-going children to provide for.

Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) deputy public prosecutor Mahamad Shukri Abu Seman requested for a deterrent sentence and urged the judge to consider public interest and the fact that the accused had misused his position.

Asmadi sentenced the accused to four months' jail for each of the charges and ordered the sentences to run consecutively starting from yesterday.

He also granted the defence's application for a stay of execution until the appeal process was completed.

## 5. Another top gun under MACC radar

PETALING JAYA: Another top civil servant is being investigated for alleged corruption and will be picked up very soon by the anti-graft body.

It is learnt the suspect, in his 50s, is a director of a government agency in a federal ministry.

The suspect was said to have abused his power for personal gain over contracts worth millions of ringgit.

Officers from the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) are gathering more information before detaining the suspect to assist in investigations.

Sources said the suspect used his position and authority to approve contracts to supply goods and products for the agency under his purview to certain suppliers with vested interest.

"We believe the suspect received a substantial amount in kickbacks from these suppliers.

"Initial checks also found that these suppliers use different company names when submitting quotations in a bid to secure the projects successfully," added the source.

This ruse was used to avoid detection by the selection committee.

But the MACC got wind of these dubious deals, and is now tracing all the contracts given out by the suspect over the past few years.

The suspect is expected to be picked up any time this week.

Several suppliers and contractors will also be called up and questioned in relation to the probe.

MACC deputy chief commissioner (operations) Datuk Azam Baki confirmed the case but declined to give details.

Over the past few months, the MACC has made a string of high-profile arrests, including several big fish in positions of power who allegedly abused them for personal gain.

One of the pledges made by the new MACC chief commissioner Datuk Dzulkifli Ahmad is to clean up the public sector and GLCs within three years.



## 6. Mara starts internal probe into Kafa sponsorship



KUALA LUMPUR: Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) on Wednesday started its internal probe into allegations surrounding its subsidiaries' sponsorship of the Kelantan Football Association (Kafa).

Its acting chairman, Datuk Dr Yusof Yacob, said the first meeting of the internal audit committee, held at the Mara headquarters, was to discuss preliminary issues surrounding the allegations.

"Tan Sri Annuar Musa (who has been suspended as Mara chairman) was not called in.

"It is only the first meeting and we are not sure how many meetings will be held," Dr Yusof told The Star Online.

He said it was up to the committee to decide who should be called to assist in the probe or when Annuar has to give his explanation.

"Please don't publicise it and allow the committee to do its work," he added.

When contacted, Annuar said he was unaware of the committee's meeting.

"I was not called or informed of anything. You have to ask Mara this," he said.

Last Tuesday, Mara held a special meeting and announced Annuar's immediate suspension as chairman of Mara and Pelaburan Mara Berhad (PMB).

At the meeting, it was announced that an internal audit committee would be formed to investigate PMB's and Universiti Kuala Lumpur's (UniKL) sponsorships of Kafa through The Red Warriors Sdn Bhd.

Last Friday, Annuar, who cut short an official trip to New Zealand, returned to the country and was questioned for four hours by the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) in Putrajaya.

## 7. Shahrir denies reports Felda lost RM4.3bil



PETALING JAYA: Newly-appointed Felda chairman Tan Sri Shahrir Abdul Samad has denied reports claiming he had said RM4.3bil of the agency's funds was missing.

The Johor Baru MP added that he had a list that clearly showed that the RM4.3bil had been properly invested.

"There are no missing funds. From the RM6bil, we have spent RM1.7bil on Felda settlers with every family receiving a payment of RM15,000. The balance of RM4.3bil had been spent on a RM300mil one-off payments to Sabah, one RM250mil payment to Pahang, Felda settler housing loans worth RM400mil, management expenses of RM883mil in addition to local and foreign property investments, the purchase of shares and a lot more," he said.

Shahrir was responding to reports alleging that he had questioned how the RM4.3bil balance from the RM6bil received from Felda Global Ventures' initial public offering (IPO) had been spent.

He said that RM1.438bil from the RM4.3bil had been spent on real estate investments both at home and abroad, mainly in hotel properties.

These investments include property in Bukit Katil, Malacca (RM304mil), the Grand Borneo Hotel in Sabah (RM86mil), the Grand Plaza Serviced Apartments in London (RM500mil), the National Institute of Valuation building (RM225mil) besides stock purchases in Iris Corporation Berhad (RM110mil).

According to him, Felda also purchased Felda Technoplant Sdn Bhd for RM38mil, and it incurred losses of about RM108mil involving the Transnovasi project.

"My responsibility is to ensure that all investments made by Felda go according to plan and that they provide good returns," he said.

He added that Felda would be selling a London hotel it purchased in 2012 for RM548mil, with the sale expected to be finalised shortly.

#### **8. DBKL officer gets stiffer punishment over cheating charges**

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court here enhanced the punishment on a city council enforcement officer, who had appealed against his sentence for cheating a trader over licences for pasar malam lots.

High Court Judicial Commissioner Mohamad Shariff Abu Samah sentenced P. Sugumaran, 46, to two years' jail and RM8,000 fine on each of the two charges of cheating, and instructed that the sentences to run concurrently from Tuesday.

Sugumaran had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment and fined RM5,000 for each charge by the Sessions Court here on Jan 6, 2015.

He was charged under Section 415 of the Penal Code with inducing M. Sathivelu to hand him a total of RM1,800 for licences at six pasar malam lots in Lorong Tunku Abdul Rahman here.

The offences were committed at the Jalan Pudu AmBank branch here on May 7 and May 29, 2008.

Earlier, Mohamad Shariff said the court found that there were payments made either in cash or deposited into Sugumaran's bank account.

Defence counsel S. Ramesh applied for a stay pending appeal, but Mohamad Shariff rejected the application.

#### **9. No JPJ officers involved in fitness cert fraud, says D-G**

KUALA LUMPUR: Road Transport Department (JPJ) officers were not involved in the cases in Penang of commercial drivers getting Public Services Vehicle (PSV) licences without a proper medical check-up, said JPJ director-general Datuk Seri Nadzri Siron.

He said the JPJ director there had confirmed that none of the personnel were implicated in the cases, which came to light with the arrests of 10 persons, mostly doctors.

They had allegedly falsely certified the drivers as fit without having them take the required medical test to get their PSV licences.

Nadzri also pointed out that JPJ officers did not hand out the fitness forms because these could be downloaded online by drivers applying for the licence.

He said JPJ would submit a report on the incident to the Malaysian Medical Association, which could then decide if the doctors should be blacklisted.

He was speaking to reporters at an appreciation ceremony for JPJ personnel and media who took part in a traffic operation during Chinese New Year.

He said 2,318 motorists had been caught. The offences were: Not wearing a seat belt (768 cases); beating a red-light (413); abusing the emergency lane (334); overtaking on the left (265); overtaking on double white lines (256); using handphones while driving (225); and road hogging (57).

"They were not issued compounds (usually a fine of up to RM300), but were instead charged in court and face fines of up to RM2,000 for each offence," he said.

Nadzri said a total of 52,726 summonses were issued during the 16-day operation, which resulted in a drop of 7.9% in the number of fatal accidents compared to the same period last year.

#### 10. EPF to bank on private market investments for better returns



KUALA LUMPUR: The Employees Provident Fund (EPF) will continue efforts at creating greater access to private market investments this year for better returns, Chief Executive Officer Datuk Shahril Ridza Ridzuan said.

He said among the focus is infrastructure, property and private equities.

"We feel that (the private market) will provide us with better inflation returns, which is always a core target of EPF," he told a media briefing on the 2016 dividend here, Bernama said.

The EPF declared on last Saturday, a 5.7 per cent dividend for 2016, with the total payout amounting to RM37.08 billion.

Meanwhile, Bloomberg reported that the EPF's key focus remains building up assets in infrastructure, property and private equities.

"EPF sees incremental growth in foreign investment for 2017. Impact of weaker ringgit is that EPF is more careful about timing in putting its money out on overseas investments," it said.

The EPF is also doing a lot more trading on assets offshore, selling off assets and reinvesting in better opportunities

The EPF plans to "recycle" of assets in UK, looking toward investment in Europe and Japan.

#### 11. Army officer arrested by MACC



PETALING JAYA: A 57-year old army lieutenant-colonel has been detained by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for alleged corruption resulting in millions of ringgit in losses.

The suspect - who is in charge of a maintenance unit at Wisma Angkatan Tentera Malaysia's defence engineering services division - was arrested at the Temerloh MACC office at about 2.30pm Thursday, according to sources.

He was detained after MACC had requested that he appear at their office to have his statement recorded over allegations of corruption and abuse of power involving him.

It is learned that the suspect had allegedly received kickbacks from several contractors, including a firm owned by his father, since 2014.

MACC deputy chief commissioner (operations) Datuk Azam Baki confirmed the arrest of the army officer to assist in investigations.



## 12. Six nabbed in Johor land scandal



MACC seized at least 15 luxury cars, local and foreign currencies, and documents in a series of raids on Friday.

JOHOR BARU: At least six people have been arrested during investigations into what is believed to be massive land corruption in the state of Johor.

The investigations involved the conversion of land premiums at "discounted rates" causing the state government millions of ringgit in losses.

It is learnt that Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) officers seized at least 15 luxury cars, cash in local and foreign currencies, and documents in a series of raids on Friday.

At least 45 bank accounts involving over RM15.5mil have been frozen.

All the suspects, aged between 25 and 50, have been remanded to assist in investigations.

MACC deputy commissioner (operations) Datuk Azam Baki confirmed the arrests.

### **13. Saudi Arabia's Aramco to ink JV with Petronas over RAPID project**

PUTRAJAYA: Saudi Arabia's Aramco will be investing US\$7bil (RM31bil) in the Refinery and Petrochemical Integrated Development (RAPID) project in Pengerang, Johor.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the joint venture between Saudi Arabia's national petroleum and natural gas company and Petronas will be inked on Tuesday after weeks of negotiations.

"This is an investment that has a huge significance for the country," he said after a series of meetings with Saudi Ruler King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Saud on Monday

Details of the project will be released at the signing ceremony scheduled in Kuala Lumpur to be witnessed by King Salman and Najib.

They also discussed on strengthening cooperation in security and defence as well as combating terror and extremism.

King Salman is on a four-day state visit to Malaysia starting Sunday.

#### 14. High Court upholds decision to acquit former sec-gen of graft



SHAH ALAM: Former Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry secretary-general Datuk Abdul Hanan Alang Endut (pix) is now a free man after the High Court here rejected an appeal against a Sessions Court decision which found him not guilty of 10 counts of corruption involving RM59,390.60.

Speaking to media outside the courtroom after the decision on Monday, Abdul Hanan said he was thankful that the case is now over.

'I do not know what will happen next but it is a relief,' he said before leaving with his wife and lead counsel Tan Sri Dr Muhammad Shafee Abdullah.

In his judgment Justice Abdul Halim Aman said the prosecution failed to fully prove all the charges made against Abdul Hanan.

'The statement of the main prosecution witness was consistent with the caution statement recorded from Abdul Hanan that the giving and receiving of the cheques were for the purpose of loans to a friend,' said Justice Abdul Halim.

He added that there was a written agreement between them stating that Abdul Hanan would repay the loans once he received his gratuity after his retirement, and said this was confirmed by the investigating officer.

According to him, the investigating officer of the case recorded the main prosecution witness' statement that the loans were given without interest, adding that the court found the loans to be genuine and not intended to be bribes.

'After deliberating on all statements and exhibits presented throughout the trial, the court finds that the prosecution's appeal has no merit and is therefore rejected. The respondent is free from

all charges and the decision meted by the Sessions Court on March 30, 2012 will stay," said Justice Abdul Halim.

Abdul Hanan was charged in 2009 with 10 counts of receiving bribes in the form of United Overseas Bank blank cheques from Global Goodway (M) Sdn Bhd's Adam Omar as an incentive for approving the company's TechnoFund application in December 2008, and cashing them for RM59,390.60.

The Sessions Court subsequently acquitted and discharged Abdul Hanan on March 30, 2012 without calling for his defence after 34 prosecution witnesses testified in the case.

However, the prosecution then filed an appeal at the High Court arguing that the Sessions Court judge had ignored the definition of bribe in the judgment and had erred for not taking into account that a loan was also a form of a bribe.

### 15. Report: 60% of Malaysians believe corruption has worsened



KUALA LUMPUR: Some 60% of Malaysians feel that the level of corruption has increased, according to the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) 2017 Asia Pacific report.

Transparency International Malaysia president Datuk Akhbar Satar (*pic*) said this was a jump from the 39% who felt that way in 2013 and the 30% in 2014.

The report was based on a survey of 1,009 respondents between November last year and January this year, he said when announcing the GCB 2017 report here Tuesday.

"Fifty-three percent of Malaysians also feel that the current government is ineffective in handling the fight against corruption," he added.

However, Akhbar noted that 46% of Malaysians felt that business executives were more prone to be involved in corruption, compared with 45% who said government officials were more prone.

He also said Malaysia was facing an "integrity crisis" as it was those 39 years old and below who were most involved in bribery and corruption.

"There must be an in-depth study to determine the root cause of this," he added.

However, Akhbar said there were some positive outcomes from the survey, with 68% of Malaysians showing awareness of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

"The public must be fair to the MACC and have some trust in them.

"More people must come forward with information and evidence to help them (the MACC) fight bribery and corruption," he added.

However, he said that in order to gain public trust, the MACC must investigate without fear or favour and not practise "selective prosecution".

"The new MACC chief commissioner said that apart from the big fish, the MACC would also go after politicians.

"The public is waiting for this," he added.

In January, MACC chief commissioner Datuk Dzulkipli Ahmad, who was appointed last July, said the Commission would be going after corrupt politicians no matter their rank.

Akhbar said that Malaysians felt that the most effective ways of fighting graft included reporting incidences of corruption, refusing to bribe, and voting in clean politicians.

"Politicians must not only be clean but seen to be clean," he added.

He said that 55% of Malaysians also believed that ordinary people could make a difference in the fight against corruption.

#### **16. 200 witnesses to be called for Sabah 'watergate' trial**

KOTA KINABALU: Some 200 witnesses are expected to be called during the Sabah Water Department corruption trial that has been fixed for four weeks in July and August.

Former department director Ag Mohd Tahir Ag Talib, 54, his wife Fauziah Piut, 51, and former deputy director Lim Lam Beng, 64, will go on trial after their case management on May 4.

Sessions Court judge Abu Bakar Manat fixed the dates after taking into account the time for the prosecution and defence to go through the documents and evidence.

The three are accused of being involved in the nation's biggest corruption case so far involving cash and assets totalling RM61.4mil.

Abu Bakar set July 4-7, July 25-28, Aug 8-11 and Aug 22-25 for trial.

He also directed that the list of witnesses and documentary evidence be produced before the trial begins.

Ag Mohd Tahir faces 12 charges of corruption over a sum totalling RM56.9mil while Fauziah faces 19 charges involving cash and assets totalling RM2.2mil.

Lim faces four charges of money laundering involving property and cash totalling RM2.3mil.

Ag Mohd Tahir and Fauziah were allowed RM10mil and RM2mil bail, respectively, the highest amount on record, while Lim was allowed a RM1mil bail.

However, Ag Mohd Tahir and Fauziah later had their bail amounts reduced by half.

Only Ag Mohd Tahir could not post bail.

The charges are framed under Sections 4(1)(a) and (b) of the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001.