

The Star July 2020

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1. Guan Eng to testify in damages assessment hearing of his suit against Raja Petra



KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama): Former finance minister Lim Guan Eng (*pic*) will testify in the hearing of assessment of damages in his defamation suit against blogger Raja Petra Raja Kamarudin over allegations of corruption in the RM6.3bil Penang undersea tunnel project.

Lim's counsel, Simon Murali, told reporters that the assessment of damages is regarding the judgment in default awarded by the High Court to Lim on Feb 28.

"The court has set Aug 21 for hearing and we told the court that so far only one plaintiff's witness will testify and that is Lim himself," he said after case management before Judge Datin Rohani Ismail in chambers Wednesday (July 1).

On Feb 28, Lim, who is also former Penang chief minister, obtained a judgment in default against Raja Petra as the blogger did not contest the suit.

Lim filed the suit on Sept 6 last year over a series of "From the MACC Files" articles, in both English and Bahasa Malaysia, carried on Raja Petra's online news portal, "Malaysia Today", between Feb 24 and March 15, 2019.

The purported defamatory articles are with regard to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission's (MACC) investigation into the issue of alleged corruption in the infrastructure project.

Lim had sought exemplary damages on grounds that Raja Petra had profited from the huge volume of readership on all the articles.

He had also, among others, sought a front-page apology, and an injunction to prevent the blogger from repeating his allegations.

The DAP secretary-general filed an application for a judgment in default after Raja Petra failed to respond to the notice of suit that Lim placed in three newspapers this year.

Lim had also attempted to serve the writ and statement of claim to Raja Petra by personal service at the blogger's last known address, which was obtained from the National Registration Department and the Election Commission, but was unsuccessful.

2. Immigration officer nabbed over alleged RM3,000 bribe

SHAH ALAM (Bernama): The Selangor Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) arrested an immigration officer on suspicion of soliciting and receiving a bribe amounting to RM3,000.

The man, in his 40s, was arrested when he presented himself at the Selangor MACC office at about 2pm Thursday (July 2) to record his statement.

According to MACC sources, the suspect, who is with the Putrajaya Immigration office, was suspected of soliciting and receiving the bribe from an individual in relation to the latter's foreign worker, whose permit had expired.

The case is being investigated under Section 17(a) of the MACC Act 2009 and the suspect will be brought to the Shah Alam Magistrate's Court Friday (July 3) for a remand application.

Selangor MACC director Datuk Alias Salim when contacted confirmed the arrest.

3. Guan Eng summoned to MACC HQ in Putrajaya



PUTRAJAYA: Former Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng has been called in by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), likely over the controversial RM6.3bil Penang undersea tunnel project.

He arrived at MACC headquarters here at 1.05pm on Wednesday (July 22), accompanied by Puchong MP Gobind Singh Deo and Jelutong MP RSN Rayer.

Lim served as Penang Chief Minister between 2008 and 2018.

Graft investigators have so far questioned close to a dozen people over the case.

This includes Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow and state exco members Jagdeep Singh Deo, Chong Eng, and Phee Boon Poh.

The MACC has also visited the offices of state Public Works, Utilities and Flood Mitigation Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari and Deputy Chief Minister II Dr P. Ramasamy on the 52nd floor of Komtar.

The controversial RM6.3bil Penang undersea tunnel project is again being probed by the anti-graft authority following fresh leads.

It is believed that the MACC is looking into why the state government allowed the Penang Tunnel special purpose vehicle (SPV) company to pre-sell state land rights worth RM3bil despite a four-year delay in the construction of roads.

Investigators are also believed to be looking into the RM305mil feasibility and detailed design studies that have yet to be completed, even though payment of RM220mil had been made to the SPV.

On hearing the news that Lim would be questioned, the media came in droves to camp out at MACC.

4. MACC in final stage of completing investigation papers on undersea tunnel project, says Azam Baki

GEORGE TOWN (Bernama): The investigation papers on the Penang undersea tunnel project is in the final stage of completion, says the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

The investigation papers on the project are expected to be completed within two to three weeks and would be submitted to the deputy public prosecutor for further action, chief commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki told Bernama when contacted here Friday (July 3).

Earlier, MACC officers went to the Penang state government administrative building at the Tun Abdul Razak Complex (Komtar) here to record the statements from several officials.

Two MACC teams arrived at the 52nd floor at 9.35am, which houses the offices of Deputy Chief Minister I Datuk Ahmad Zakiyuddin Abdul Rahman, Deputy Chief Minister II Dr P. Ramasamy and two state executive councillors Zairil Khir Johari and Yeoh Soon Hin.

On Wednesday (July 1), Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said the state government had received a letter from the MACC to interview several state executive councillors and leaders regarding the undersea tunnel issue.

Former Penang Port Commission chairman Jeffrey Chew Gim Eam was remanded for four days beginning July 1 to facilitate investigations into the case.

5. Penang CM: State govt will cooperate fully in MACC probe on undersea tunnel project



BUKIT MERTAJAM: Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow (*pic*) says the state government will fully cooperate with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) in the ongoing investigation of the Penang undersea tunnel project.

Chow said the state government would give their utmost assistance to the MACC so that the anti-graft agency can complete their investigation.

"It is the rule of law in this country, we have to abide and cooperate in the investigation," he told reporters after launching the offer letter ceremony of rent-to-own (RTO) scheme at Desa Wawasan Flat on Saturday (July 4) morning.

Chow said several executive councillors and former councillors of the state government including him will also be summoned by the MACC in this few days.

He added that several officers from the state technical agencies will also be called up.

On Friday (July 3), MACC officers visited the offices of state Public Works, Utilities and Flood Mitigation Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari and Deputy Chief Minister II P. Ramasamy on the 52nd floor of Komtar.

It was believed that Ramasamy was interviewed by the officers while Zairil was not in the office.

On Wednesday (July 1), Chow said the state government had received a letter from the MACC to interview several state executive councillors and leaders regarding the undersea tunnel issue.

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6. MACC arrests business division head over RM112k bribe

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama): The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has detained a business division head of a private company for allegedly soliciting and receiving a bribe amounting to RM112,000.

According to a MACC source, the 49-year-old man was detained at 4pm Tuesday (July 7) after he came to the Klang MACC office to give his statement on the case.

"The suspect is alleged to have solicited for and received a bribe from a company as an 'allowance' for appointing it to carry out printing works between 2017 and 2018," the source told Bernama.

Selangor MACC director Datuk Alias Salim, when contacted, confirmed the arrest adding that the case was being investigated under Section 16(a) of the MACC Act 2009.

He said the suspect would be brought to the Shah Alam Magistrate's Court on Wednesday (July 8) for a remand order.

7. Lawyer linked to Sabah development contracts arrested by MACC

KOTA KINABALU: A lawyer believed to be linked to deals with infrastructure development contracts by the Sabah government has been arrested by graft investigators.

The 61-year-old lawyer was remanded for six days by the Magistrates Court on Friday (July 10), sources said.

His remand comes a day after a senior state department director, in his 50s, was detained on Thursday (July 9) for questioning.

The recently appointed director was called into the Malaysia Anti Corruption Commission (MACC) Sabah office on Wednesday (July 8) for questioning prior to his detention for a related case.

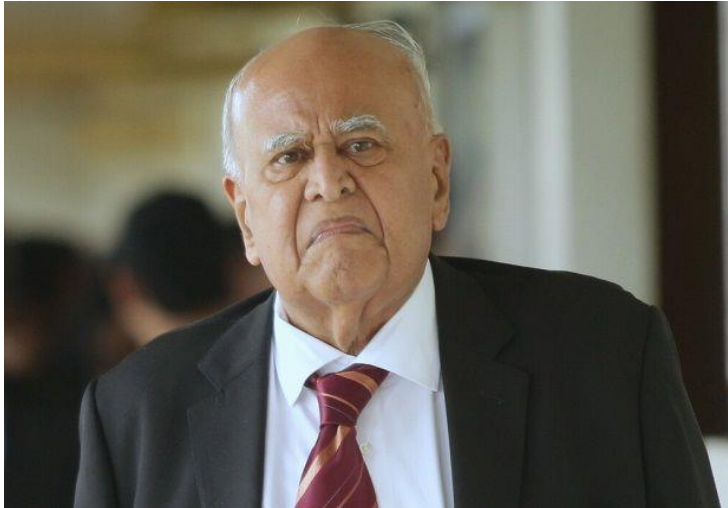
MACC Sabah has declined any comment on the ongoing investigations by a team from their headquarters in Putrajaya.

It is still not clear what the focus of the investigations are but sources have indicated that it involves multi-million ringgit infrastructure development projects undertaken by a state ministry and its departments.

Prior to his remand, the lawyer was called into the MACC office on Thursday to give his statement and was arrested before being brought to court here for a remand application.

The state department director who was nabbed earlier is also being probed for suspected corruption linked to infrastructure development projects.

8. 1MDB trial: Sri Ram appointed as senior DPP to get Najib charged, convicted, says Shafee



Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram.

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama): The appointment of former Federal Court judge Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram (*pic*) as a senior Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) in the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB)-linked cases was to get Datuk Seri Najib Razak charged and convicted, claims lawyer Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah.

He said this was because Sri Ram, as an appointed DPP, has decided what evidence and documents that need to be produced in court.

"It is not important for Sri Ram to know the source of Najib's monies either in SRC International Sdn Bhd and 1MDB case. What was important to him was to charge Najib," he said in his submission in the former prime minister's bid to disqualify Sri Ram in his 1MDB-linked cases before High Court Judge Datuk Seri Mariana Yahya.

"The appointment of Sri Ram was particularly navigated with the purpose to get Najib charged and convicted," he claimed.

Meanwhile, Najib's other counsel, Harvinderjit Singh argued that the Public Prosecutor (Attorney General) did not have the power to appoint a lawyer (Sri Ram) as a part-time DPP and a practising lawyer at the same time under Section 376 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

"The exercise of power under Section 376 is wrong. It's unreasonable, irrational, and considerably improper," Harvinderjit submitted.

He added that Sri Ram was appointed to fulfil the promises of the Pakatan Harapan government by referring to a series of WhatsApp conversations between Sri Ram and the former AG Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali on May 12, 2018, three days after the 14th general election (GE-14).

"Sri Ram had advised Mohamed Apandi to charge Najib. In that message, Sri Ram had already determined Najib as a criminal despite no investigation paper (IP) was opened at the material of time. He has already pre-determined the criminality. What is worse, he already determined that Najib is going to face the music," he said adding that the appointment of Sri Ram was a mala fide (bad faith) and irrational.

Senior Federal Counsel (SFC) Shamsul Bolhassan who represented the AG/Public Prosecutor, Government of Malaysia and Sri Ram as respondents, objecting the matter by saying that the appointment of Sri Ram was in accordance with the law.

"It is respectfully submitted that the language of Section 376 (3) (of CPC) is broad and permissive of the appointment of Sri Ram as a senior DPP. Section 376(3) does not expressly limit the potential senior DPP from only among the Legal Officers serving under the Judicial and Legal Service," he said.

Shamsul added that the government, like any private party, can choose and appoint or authorise any advocate to appear on their behalf in any court of law.

"It is respectfully submitted that it is a sheer intellectual waste to engage in hair-splitting argument on the legality of Sri Ram appointment under Section 376(3) CPC," he said.

After hearing arguments from both parties Justice Mariana fixed July 29 for further submissions on the judicial review Najib's and Shafee's applications for a judicial review to challenge the AG's decision to appoint Sri Ram as a DPP under Section 376 (3) of the Criminal Procedure Code.

In the applications filed in December 2018, besides acting as Najib's counsel, Shafee has also filed for the judicial review as he too is seeking to recuse Sri Ram from his RM9.5mil money laundering trial, which has yet to commence.

They are seeking a court order to revoke Sri Ram's appointment or recuse him, saying that his letter of appointment is invalid and a declaration that there is a conflict of interest in Sri Ram's appointment and request for an order to prohibit him from leading the prosecution team in all of their cases, including on corruption, abuse of power and money laundering.

9. Rosmah trial: Jepak Holdings' MD issued RM1mil 'consultation fee' cheque



Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor

KUALA LUMPUR: The business partner of Saidi Abang Samsudin received a cheque worth RM1mil from the Jepak Holdings managing director in 2017 as a fee for helping the company to acquire a solar hybrid project in Sarawak, the High Court heard on Wednesday (July 15).

Rayyan Radzwil Abdullah, during Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor's graft trial in connection with the solar hybrid project, said the RM1mil was meant as a "consultation fee" and was given to him in August 2017.

"At the end of July 2017, Saidi told me through WhatsApp that Jepak Holdings had received its first payment for the solar hybrid project and diesel generator set maintenance work, amounting to RM63mil.

"Then, I received a cheque worth RM1mil in my name from Saidi as the consultant fee for the work I had done to help Jepak Holdings acquire the solar hybrid project," he said.

Rayyan said that Saidi then told him to contact Rosmah's former aide Datuk Rizal Mansor to arrange a meeting between them and Rosmah to thank her for her help in enabling Jepak Holdings to acquire the solar hybrid project.

He claimed that they also wanted to give Rosmah some funds as payment (bayaran sumbangan) to show their gratitude for her help.

Rayyan is the prosecution's 16th witness in the corruption trial of Rosmah, 68, who is facing a charge of soliciting RM187.5mil and two other charges of receiving a bribe of RM6.5mil from Saidi.

The bribe was allegedly received through Rizal as gratification for helping Jepak Holdings to secure the Hybrid Photovoltaic Integrated System and maintenance and operation of genset-

diesel worth RM1.25bil for 369 rural schools in Sarawak through direct negotiation with the Education Ministry.

Rosmah allegedly committed the offences at Lygon Cafe, Sunway Putra Mall, Jalan Putra, here; her residence in Jalan Langgak Duta, Taman Duta and at Seri Perdana, Persiaran Seri Perdana, Presint 10, Putrajaya, between January 2016 and Sept 7, 2017.

Rayyan also told the court that Saidi informed him sometime in December 2016 that he had given RM5mil to Rosmah via Rizal, allegedly as a "contribution" to her for helping Jepak Holdings acquire the Letter of Award (LOA) for the solar hybrid project.

"Around 10pm the same day, Saidi asked me to accompany him to Rizal's house in Vista Kirana in Segambut as Saidi wanted to give a gift to him (Rizal).

"After we left the house, Saidi told me he gave RM500,000 to Rizal as a reward (ganjaran) for his help in Jepak Holdings acquiring the solar hybrid project from the Education Ministry," he said.

Rayyan said that he met Rosmah on Sept 7, 2017 at her house in Jalan Langgak Duta, where he saw Saidi's driver bring in two black backpacks with orange stripes into the house.

"A few minutes (after the backpacks were taken into the house), Rosmah came in with Rizal. Rizal showed Rosmah the location of the two backpacks that were placed beside a green coloured sofa in the living room," he said.

He added that Saidi told Rosmah during the meeting that he will give her some "payment" at that time and that "other payments" will follow suit.

"Rosmah only nodded in agreement and said 'okay lah'. Rosmah didn't seem surprised by the monetary gift," he said.

10. Govt bids to bar PSI access to monies

KUALA LUMPUR: The government is seeking to prohibit PetroSaudi International (PSI) Ltd and its director Tarek Obaid from using the more than US\$340mil (RM1.45bil) linked to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) and stashed in a client's account at a United Kingdom law firm.

In the notice of motion which was filed on July 10, the government said the money was related to an offence under Section 4(1) of the Anti-Money Laundering,

Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001.

It named Tarek, PSI, Petrosaudi Oil Services (Venezuela) Ltd, Clyde & Co LLP and Temple Fiduciary Services Ltd as the first, second, third, fourth and fifth respondents respectively.

The application sought to bar a total of US\$340,258,246.87 deposited in a client's account at law firm Clyde & Co LLP as well as an unspecified amount of money deposited in an intermediate account name of Temple Fiduciary Services at Barclays Bank.

Both the specified and unspecified monies belonged to PetroSaudi Oil Services, which was wholly owned by Tarek through PSI, an oil services and production company.

The application was supported by an affidavit affirmed by Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission investigating officer Mohd Afiq Ab Aziz.

Mohd Afiq, who was one of the investigating officers responsible for the 1MDB investigation, said that in his course of duty, he had uncovered information that had led him to reasonably believe and suspect that the assets being held or deposited abroad were proceeds from illegal activities.

The US\$340mil, he claimed, forms part of the subject matter or evidence in connection with the conspiracy to defraud or fraud which involves former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Tarek, fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho and other related individuals against 1MDB and its subsidiaries.

Mohd Afiq said Najib was currently facing multiple criminal charges in relation to 1MDB, abuse of power and money laundering.

He said the application to block the monies was appropriate until such a time that the courts could definitively determine whether

the monies rightfully belonged to 1MDB. The High Court fixed tomorrow to hear the prosecution's application. Deputy Public Prosecutors Budiman Lufti Mohamed and Muhammad Izzat Fauzan appeared for the prosecution during the case management before deputy registrar Mahyudin Mohmad Som yesterday.

Budiman told the press that once the order was granted, the prosecution would request a mutual legal assistance from the United Kingdom courts to enforce the order.

11. Asst accountant pleads not guilty to 143 CBT charges



IPOH: An assistant accountant was slapped with 143 charges of committing criminal breach of trust amounting to RM38,000.

Nurul Husna Atiqah Shuib, 32, from Ayer Tawar, claimed trial to all the charges framed under Section 408 of the Penal Code before Sessions Court judge Azman Abu Hassan here on Friday (July 17).

According to the charge sheet, Nurul, 32, committed the offence at the Petrogaz Engineering office in Manjung between November 2017 and April 2018.

If found guilty, she could be jailed up to 14 years with whipping and a fine.

In appealing for lower bail, Nurul's lawyer, S. Dharmanathan, said his client only earned about RM2,000 a month.

"She has three children aged two, six and eight, while her husband is not working," he said.

The judge set bail at RM15,000 and Sept 10 for mention.

He also ordered that her passport be handed over to the court and to report herself to Manjung police headquarters once a month.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Nur Farhana Hashim prosecuted.

12. Govt provided an economic stimulus package of RM295bil to help M'sians, businesses during MCO, says PM



PETALING JAYA: The government pumped in an economic stimulus package worth some RM295bil aimed at helping Malaysians and businesses tide over during the movement control order (MCO), says Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (*pic*).

If the MCO had to be enforced again, it would be counterproductive to the efforts made by the government, and the nation would stand to lose RM2bil daily while millions of Malaysians would also lose their source of income, said Muhyiddin.

Over 2.75 million jobs have been saved under the wage subsidy and worker retention programme introduced under the Prihatin and Penjana economic recovery packages introduced by the government, he said.

"Besides that, over 800,000 businesses, including micro and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) became beneficiaries of these packages.

"These packages were estimated to have contributed to more than 3% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) this year.

"If the MCO had to be enforced again, one of the impacts would include the estimated GDP growth in 2021 not being achieved.

"Businesses would have to close again and the unemployment rate which was at 5.3% in May 2020 might increase sharply.

"This is something that we must avoid," he said during a televised special address on Monday (July 20).

Spelling out some initiatives rolled out by the Perikatan Nasional government during the MCO, Muhyiddin said to this date, RM11.14bil has been channelled to 10.4 million Bantuan Prihatin Nasional aid recipients.

As many as 1.4 million e-hailing drivers have also received cash allowance of RM500, amounting to RM34mil in total while 477,000 taxi drivers, tour guides and bus drivers had received cash allowance of RM600, or a total of RM28.8mil.

"As many as 7.7 million consumers also received a 50% discount on their electric bill worth RM312.32 in total and 1.4 million users received a 15% discount worth RM185.75mil.

"Meanwhile, 65% of households received the moratorium on bank loan payments altogether worth RM38.4bil, " he said.

In aid for entrepreneurs, Muhyiddin said as many as 545,000 micro entrepreneurs had received the Prihatin special grant worth RM1.6bil in total.

A total of 7,000 people received the Bank Simpanan Nasional microcredit facility worth RM247mil while over 23,000 people received the Tekun microcredit facility worth RM177mil.

"Wage subsidy amounting to RM7.4bil has also been channelled.

"This initiative has given benefits to 834,000 employers and 6.7 million workers nationwide, " he added.

Muhyiddin said he believed that many Malaysians affected by the Covid-19 pandemic had received benefits from the government's aid programmes.

"These initiatives are temporary in nature and are aimed at helping all of you go through hardships in life, " he said.

13. Guan Eng grilled for six hours by MACC, asked to come back Saturday (July 25)



PUTRAJAYA: Lim Guan Eng has left the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) headquarters here after almost six hours of questioning over the controversial RM6.3bil Penang undersea tunnel project.

The former finance minister left the anti-graft agency's headquarters at 7.13pm Wednesday (July 22).

Jelutong MP R. S. N. Rayer, who is acting as Lim's lawyer, said the latter is unwell and had obtained an MC for today and tomorrow.

"However, since he received the notice from the MACC, he came anyway.

"Lim has been asked to come back on Saturday (July 25)," he said.

Earlier, Lim, who was summoned by MACC investigators, arrived at around 1.05pm Wednesday.

Graft investigators had so far questioned close to a dozen people over the case.

This includes Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow and state exco members Jagdeep Singh Deo, Chong Eng, and Phee Boon Poh.

The MACC has also visited the offices of state Public Works, Utilities and Flood Mitigation Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari and Deputy Chief Minister II Dr P. Ramasamy on the 52nd floor of Komtar.

The controversial RM6.3bil Penang undersea tunnel project is again being probed by the anti-graft authority following fresh leads.

It is believed that the MACC is looking into why the state government allowed the Penang Tunnel special purpose vehicle (SPV) company to pre-sell state land rights worth RM3bil despite a four-year delay in the construction of roads.

Investigators are also believed to be looking into the RM305mil feasibility and detailed design studies that have yet to be completed, even though payment of RM220mil was made to the SPV.

Lim served as Penang Chief Minister from 2008 to 2018.

14. Enact GLC Act, says MACC corruption prevention panel member



PETALING JAYA: A GLC Act needs to be enacted for greater checks and balances in government-linked companies, said Prof Dr Edmund Terence Gomez (*pic*).

Prof Edmund, a newly appointed member of the Malaysia Anti Corruption Commission's Consultation and Prevention of Corruption Panel, said GLCs should be compelled to publicly disclose annual financial reports.

He said an independent commission for GLCs needs to be set up to monitor the way in which the institutions are run and how the funds are managed.

The commission should also monitor the processes and rationale behind the appointments of board of directors, he said, adding reasons for removal of directors should also be publicly disclosed, he said.

Prof Edmund said it was important to check elements of patronage, to ensure positions were not offered for the sake of consolidating political power.

Prof Edmund said in other parts of the world, serving MPs were not appointed as board of directors of GLCs.

He expressed surprise that many MPs were appointed as GLC directors.

"However, the enforcement of Section 17 A (of the MACC Act 2009) can serve as a deterrent for politicians holding positions in GLC," he said.

Expressing pleasant surprise over his appointment to the MACC panel of consultation and corruption prevention, Prof Edmund said he could use it as a platform to give feedback on how the GLC system operates in Malaysia.

"Until today, even the previous Pakatan Harapan government could not quantify the size of GLC in Malaysia.

"It is a shame that even the government are clueless over the exact number of *GLCs* in the country.

"There are also state level *GLCs* and subsidiaries," he said.

Dr Edmund said it was best to close down unnecessary *GLCs*, and keep only the strategic ones such as Khazanah Nasional and Permodalan Nasional Bhd.

Of the top 10 public listed companies in Malaysia, eight were *GLCs*, he noted.

He said *GLCs* could continue banking on strategic sectors such as utility, oil and gas, and banking.

"There is no need for *GLCs* to be involved in the construction, trading and services sectors. The government should invest in the technology sector," he said.

15. 1MDB: Goldman Sachs' US\$3.9bil settlement shows govt's efforts in returning assets of Malaysians, says PM



PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin welcomed Goldman Sachs' settlement of US\$3.9bil (RM16.63bil) over the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal.

Muhyiddin said with the settlement, 1MDB funds including funds returned by the US Department of Justice before this, totalled US\$4.5bil (RM19bil).

"The government is committed in its efforts to recover other assets involving 1MDB by continuing to claim from individuals and relevant parties involved in the 1MDB scandal," he said in a statement on Friday (July 24).

He also thanked the Finance Ministry, Attorney General's Chambers, Securities Commission, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), National Anti-Financial Crime Centre and the team of negotiators in their efforts to reach the settlement.

"This is a success in our efforts to return the rights and assets of the people of Malaysia," he said.

Earlier, the Finance Ministry said Goldman Sachs had agreed to a total settlement of US\$3.9bil (RM16.63bil) to resolve outstanding charges and claims related to the three bond transactions that the investment bank had structured and arranged for 1MDB.

The settlement included a cash payment of US\$2.5bil (RM10.66bil) and a guarantee for a full recovery value of at least US\$1.4bil (RM5.97bil) in assets that were traceable to the diverted proceeds from the three bond transactions.

Previously, the government had charged Goldman Sachs and 17 current and former directors of its units with allegedly misleading investors over bond sales totalling US\$6.5bil (RM27.74bil) that the company helped raise for sovereign wealth fund 1MDB.

According to the US Department of Justice, Goldman Sachs earned US\$600mil (RM2.56bil) in fees for its work with 1MDB.

16. Goldman Sachs, Malaysia agree to a total settlement of US\$3.9bil over 1MDB bonds

PETALING JAYA: Goldman Sachs agreed to a total settlement of US\$3.9bil (RM16.63bil) as part of its settlement to resolve outstanding charges and claims related to the three bond transactions that the company had structured and arranged for 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), says the Finance Ministry.

The Finance Ministry said the settlement includes a cash payment of US\$2.5bil (RM10.66bil) and a guarantee for a full recovery value of at least US\$1.4bil (RM5.97bil) in assets that were traceable to the diverted proceeds from the three bond transactions.

It noted that Goldman Sachs, at their cost, will also assist the government by appointing an asset recovery specialist to recover other related assets currently outside Malaysia, adding that the settlement represents a significant increase compared to the previous offer of US\$1.75bil (RM7.46bil) made by Goldman Sachs to the previous administration in 2019.

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Aziz said the settlement represents assets that rightfully belong to the Malaysian people.

"We are confident that we are securing more money from Goldman Sachs compared to previous attempts, which were far below expectations.

"We are also glad to be able to resolve this outside the court system, which would have cost a lot of time, money and resources. With this settlement, we will have the return of the monies expedited, and not held up by lengthy and costly court battles and legal process," he said in a statement Friday (July 24).

The ministry added that from this total settlement and from the monies that Malaysia has already received from the US Department of Justice, more than US\$4.5bil (RM19.19bil) will be returned to the people.

It also said that the government remains committed to recovering other outstanding assets.

The ministry added that the settlement by Goldman Sachs represents its acknowledgment of the misconduct of two of its former employees in the broader 1MDB fraudulent and corruption scheme.

It said the settlement will not affect Malaysia's claims against fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, also known as Jho Low, and other parties related to the 1MDB scandal.

In June, Tengku Zafrul said the government would not be willing to accept compensation of US\$3bil (RM12.8bil) from Goldman Sachs.

The government had charged Goldman Sachs and 17 current and former directors of its units for allegedly misleading investors over bond sales totalling US\$6.5bil (RM27.74bil) that the company helped raise for sovereign wealth fund 1MDB.

According to the US Department of Justice, Goldman Sachs earned US\$600mil (RM2.56bil) in fees for its work with 1MDB.

During the Pakatan Harapan administration, then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in December 2019 had said that Goldman Sachs had offered "one point something billion" dollars for an out-of-court settlement over its role in the 1MDB scandal.

Dr Mahathir had said that they had instead demanded US\$7.5bil (RM31.98bil) from Goldman Sachs.

17. Guan Eng arrives at MACC HQ for third round of questioning

PUTRAJAYA: Former finance minister Lim Guan Eng arrived at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) headquarters here for a third round of questioning at around 10.40am on Sunday (July 26).

Lim and his lawyer Jelutong MP R. S. N. Rayer arrived in a silver Mercedes.

They did not address the media and headed straight into the building.

On Saturday (July 25), Lim was questioned for about seven hours by anti-graft investigators over the RM6.3bil Penang undersea tunnel project.

Lim and Rayer were later seen exiting the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) headquarters here at 7.50pm Saturday.

On Wednesday (July 22), Lim spent six hours being questioned by MACC.

The controversial project is again being probed by the anti-graft authority following fresh leads.

Lim served as Penang chief minister from 2008 to 2018.

In a tweet, Lim said he would cooperate fully with the MACC investigation and thanked his supporters.

Graft investigators have so far questioned close to a dozen people over the case.

This includes Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow and state exco members Jagdeep Singh Deo, Chong Eng, and Phee Boon Poh.

MACC had also visited the offices of state Public Works, Utilities and Flood Mitigation Committee chairman, Zairil Khir Johari, and Deputy Chief Minister II Dr P. Ramasamy.

It is believed that MACC is looking into allegations that the state government allowed the Penang Tunnel special purpose vehicle (SPV) company to pre-sell state land rights worth RM3bil despite a four-year delay in the construction of roads.

Investigators are also believed to be looking into the feasibility and detailed design studies that have yet to be completed, even though payment of RM220mil was allegedly made to the SPV.

18. Najib maintains his innocence, vows to fight on to clear his name



KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak has maintained that he is innocent and that he intends to carry on the fight to clear his name in the SRC International Sdn Bhd.

Speaking to the press after his trial here on Tuesday (July 28), the former prime minister expressed his disappointment with the judiciary system over the case.

"I'm definitely not satisfied with the decision but in our judiciary system, the High Court is the first level, where the decision is made by only one judge.

"We have the Court of Appeal level, which has three judges. Hopefully they can accept our points and arguments.

"It's not the end of the world because there's the process of appeal and we hope we will be successful then," Najib said before leaving the Kuala Lumpur court complex.

He also urged his supporters to continue believing in him, his struggles and to continue being positive and to keep their spirits high.

Najib added that he repeated his oath in court so that he would be on record saying that he had nothing to do with the RM42mil.

At the High Court on Tuesday, Najib was found guilty of all seven charges of criminal breach of trust, money laundering and abuse of power involving RM42mil.

He was sentenced to a concurrent 12-year jail term and a RM210mil fine.

19. Two ex-GLC managers face corruption charges worth RM1.4mil

SHAH ALAM (Bernama): Two former managers of government-linked companies (GLCs) were charged in the Sessions Court here, on Wednesday (July 29) on 11 corruption charges worth RM1.4mil for supply and installation contracts for the Inland Revenue Board (LHDN) between 2012 and 2016.

Abu Haswandy Abu Bakar, 49, and Badrul Hisham Besri, 48, however pleaded not guilty after all the charges were read out by the court interpreter before Judge Rozilah Salleh.

According to the charge sheet, Abu Haswandy and Badrul Hisham were charged with jointly soliciting a bribe of RM1mil from a chief executive officer to propose a company to obtain a contract to install and deliver Intelligent Bandwidth Management Services (IBMS) for LHDN.

The offence was committed at a business centre in Bukit Jelutong, here, between Nov 30, 2012 and Dec 19, 2012.

In the same proceeding, Abu Haswandy, who was a former account manager, also faced six separate charges of receiving a bribe and fee of RM234,347.38 from the same individual for the same purpose.

He allegedly committed the offence at a bank in Taman Equine, Seri Kembangan from Sept 15, 2015 to Sept 23, 2016.

Badrul Hisham, who was also a former general manager, also faced four other charges with bribes worth RM229,347.98 from the same individual for the same purpose.

The deed was carried out at a bank in Section 16, Shah Alam from Nov 16, 2015 to July 19, 2016.

Both of them faced the charges under Section 16 (a)(A) of the MACC Act 2009 and were punishable under Section 24 (1) of the same act and could be jailed up to 20 years if found guilty and fined not less than five times the value of the bribe or RM10,000 or whichever is higher.

MACC Deputy Public Prosecutor Azmi Yusuf urged the court to impose a bail of RM50,000 each with a guarantor, to surrender their international passports and must report themselves at the beginning of each month at the MACC headquarters.

Abu Haswandy, who was represented by counsel Reuben Netto and Badrul Hisham who was represented by Afifuddin Ahmad Hafifi applied for a reduction of bail to RM15,000 each.

The court then fixed bail at RM35,000 each with two guarantors. The accused also had to surrender their international passports to the court and report at the nearest MACC office at the beginning of each month.

20. Yayasan Akalbudi trustee received over RM66mil from various parties, court hears in Zahid trial



KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama): Messrs Lewis & Co, a trustee of the charity foundation Yayasan Akalbudi belonging to Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, received more than RM66mil via cheques from various individuals and companies between 2016 and 2018, the High Court heard on Thursday (July 30).

An accountant from Lewis & Co, V. Sothilechmy, 67, said the law firm's owner, B. Muralidharan, had directed her to deposit the cheques into the firm's bank account before transferring the money into two fixed deposit accounts.

"Several payments were made via the two fixed deposit accounts, among others, to purchase two land lots, as well as to Yayasan Akalbudi," she said when reading her witness statement on the 30th day of the trial of Ahmad Zahid, who is facing criminal breach of trust, corruption and money laundering charges involving funds belonging to the foundation.

Messrs Lewis & Co has two partners, namely Muralidharan and V. Premshangar.

When asked by Deputy Public Prosecutor Lee Keng Fat during the examination-in-chief on whether the individuals and companies who issued the cheques of more than RM66mil were clients of Lewis & Co, the witness said "no".

Lee: Is Datuk Seri Zahid a client of Lewis & Co?

Sothilechmy: Yes, a client of Lewis & Co.

The 85th prosecution witness also agreed with Lee that Yayasan Al-Falah, belonging to a family member of Ahmad Zahid, was also a client of the legal firm.

Previously, the 66th prosecution witness, Faisalludin Mohamat Yusuff, told the court that Ahmad Zahid had contributed RM5.9mil to Yayasan Al-Falah, in which his brother Datuk Seri Mohamad Nasaee Ahmad Tarmizi was the board of trustees chairman, to purchase two bungalows in Country Heights, Kajang.

Ahmad Zahid, 67, is facing 27 counts of money laundering, 12 counts of criminal breach of trust involving funds belonging to Yayasan Akalbudi and eight counts of corruption.

The trial before Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues on Aug 10.

21. RM10bil RTS Link to go ahead

JOHOR BARU: The construction of the RM10bil Rapid Transit System Link between Malaysia and Singapore is expected to begin in early 2021, some 11 years after the idea was first announced by leaders from both countries.

Malaysia - through the Transport Ministry - will be forking out RM3.715bil or 39% of the total cost of the 4km link project, with the balance to be borne by Singapore.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong said the Malaysian side of the project would be 2.7km and elevated while Singapore would build the remaining 1.3km.

The link to the Woodlands station in Singapore will be underground.

The project, said Dr Wee, would be divided into two phases - the structural phase, which would take four years, and the technical phase, which would take two years.

22. MACC investigating alleged money politics involving Sabah reps



The Sabah State Assembly building in Likas.

KOTA KINABALU: A few Sabah assemblymen who claimed they had been offered money to leave the Warisan-led state administration have yet to lodge official reports with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

Sabah MACC director S. Karunanithy said they had initiated investigations into claims that several assemblymen were offered cash and attractive positions to cross over from their respective parties.

He said the MACC had contacted some of the assemblymen recently.

"The assemblymen involved did not want to make any official report. They told us there was no corrupt transaction so far," he said in a statement on Friday (July 31).

However, he said the MACC would continue to investigate the matter and was ready to accept reports and information from those who were allegedly approached or any others.

Many assemblymen from Parti Warisan Sabah-led coalition state government had claimed they had been offered large sums of money for them to cross over to the Opposition in bid to topple the state government.

A group of assemblymen led by former chief minister Tan Sri Musa Aman had pushed to topple Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal's state government.

Musa managed to get 33 assemblymen, including 13 from the Warisan-led coalition to cross over in his bid to be sworn in as chief minister.

However, the move failed when the Yang di-Pertua Negeri decided to dissolve the assembly on Thursday (July 30).