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PSD acts to plug leakage

Civil servants who breach procurement rules to face action

LABUAN: Action will be taken against civil servants found to have breached the guidelines on procurement as non-compliance is a cause of leakage in government transactions, says the Public Service Department.

Its director-general Tan Sri Mohd Khairul Adib Abd Rahman (*pic*) said there would be no compromise on the matter as it involved taxpayer's money.

"Our message is clear. There must be no tolerance for any civil servant who does not with the existing guidelines.

"Although the regulations are quite difficult to comply with, it gives us a level of confidence that there is transparency in the procurement," he said.

"It is a must to fully comply. When there are cases of non-compliance, there will be problems such as leakage and negligence.

"We will take action based on the Auditor-General's reports and public complaints on unhealthy practices among civil servants," Khairul Adib told reporters after addressing civil servants of federal department and agencies here yesterday.

He also urged the police and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to discharge their duties diligently.

He said any civil servants found committing



ing corruption in government dealings would be prosecuted.

"We have set up a committee to oversee compliance, including the ISO 37001 Anti-Bribery Management System.

"The existing Organisational Anti-Corruption Plan (OACP) is a fundamental anti-corruption document at the organisational level to overcome weaknesses and issues regarding governance, integrity and anti-corruption.

"Every ministry must have the OACP, which can help in addressing corrupt practices in the departments and agencies," Khairul Adib added.

Recently, MACC chief commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki said corruption cases resulting in leakage of government procurement involving civil servants were seen to be increasingly critical, adding that 50% of such cases involved government agencies.

Following this, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali said he would convene a meeting with MACC over allegations of leakage of government procurement involving civil servants.

He said the matter must be addressed immediately for fear that it would slow down the economic recovery process, especially since the country was still facing the threat of Covid-19.

"I will discuss with MACC on what should be done or the preventive measures to be adopted.

"Our economy is already showing a slow pace of recovery due to the pandemic. If there are leakages of government procurement, I am worried that our country will not be able to progress as rapidly as we planned," Mohd Zuki added. — Bernama

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Officer 'wrote complaint to start Rosmah probe'

KUALA LUMPUR: A Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) investigating officer told the High Court that she had made a written complaint against Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor on Nov 9, 2018, to start investigations into the former prime minister's wife under Section 16 (a) (A) MACC Act 2009.

Noornabilah Mohd Aziman, 30, said the complaint was prepared on the instructions of her superior, based on a report that had been investigated by the MACC.

The 23rd witness, who is also the last prosecution witness, said from the previous investigation Rosmah was suspected to have solicited and accepted bribes from Jepak Holdings Sdn Bhd, where Saidi Abang Samsudin was the firm's managing director.

Reading her witness statement, she said the bribes were alleged to be a reward for helping the company to secure the Photovoltaic Solar System Integrated Project and maintenance and operation of diesel gensets for 369 rural schools in Sarawak, worth RM1.25bil through direct negotiations from the Education Ministry (MOE).

"I began the investigation by obtaining documents from the MOE, Finance Ministry, Maybank Jalan Tuanku Branch and CIMB Bintulu Branch.

"I also received several other documents such as photographs and sketches of the scene, forensic reports together with CDs and two



Day in court: Rosmah's graft hearing continues.

volumes of Hybrid Solar Project Contract documents.

"I also got hold of recordings of the (alleged) conversation between Datin Seri Rosmah and (her husband) Datuk Seri Najib Razak, letter of appointment for Datuk Rizal Mansor (Rosmah's former special officer), documents on company information issued by the Companies Commission of Malaysia and other related documents.

"As the investigating officer I also received several other documents from MACC officers who assisted in the investigation," she said during examination-in-chief by deputy public

prosecutor Idham Abd Ghani.

Also present to testify yesterday was Prime Minister's Department, Human Resource Division principal assistant secretary Nuryusran Sairan, 46, who confirmed Rizal's position when he was employed there.

Meanwhile, the fifth prosecution witness, former Education minister Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid, who was called back by the defence for cross-examination could not appear in court, being under home quarantine after returning from Sabah.

Senior DPP Datuk Seri Gopal Ram who confirmed the matter also sub-

mitted a letter from MOH stating that Mahdzir was identified as having close contact to an individual who had been confirmed positive for Covid-19 and was to undergo quarantine at his residence in accordance with surveillance and observation order.

"He (Mahdzir) has been served with notice not to leave his residence. We are told he is going for his third Covid-19 test this Wednesday and will only get the result on Thursday. He is under quarantine till Oct 12.

"As such, we seek the court's indulgence to take this case next week, Oct 13 at 2pm, to have Mahdzir complete the cross-examination and close our case," said Sri Ram.

Lead counsel Datuk Jagjit Singh told the court the defence would confirm tomorrow whether they are available on Oct 13, to which Judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan agreed.

Rosmah, 69, is facing a charge of soliciting RM187.5mil and two counts of receiving a total RM6.5mil bribe from Saidi, through her former aide Datuk Rizal Mansor, in exchange for helping Jepak Holdings obtain the RM1.25bil Sarawak rural school solar energy project.

The acts were allegedly committed at Lygon Cafe, Sunway Putra Mall, Jalan Putra here, Rosmah's residence in Jalan Langgak Duta, Taman Duta, and at Seri Perdana, Precinct 10, Putrajaya between January 2016 and September 2017. The hearing continues today. — Bernama

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'Hold proceedings in camera'

Spy chief trial witnesses a matter of national security, says DPP

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court was told the statements of 11 prosecution witnesses in the trial of former Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation (MEIO) director-general Datuk Hasanah Abdul Hamid has to be conducted in camera as it involves national security.

Deputy public prosecutor Muhammad Iskandar Ahmad, in his argument, said that the 11 witnesses comprised those who were still serving in their respective stations abroad.

"What would be the effect on foreign relations with statements by the witnesses on agencies abroad? If the identities of the witnesses are revealed, it could threaten their security and affect the capability of witnesses in carrying out their duties.

"The witnesses could also expose information on intelligence in the country involved, and could indirectly expose the names of the countries with which we have close intelligence ties.

"The bigger impact would be on existing relations as well as a negative impact on Malaysia's diplomatic relations with other countries and could threaten our country as a



Day one: Hasanah (right) at the KL High Court.

whole," he said in a prosecution application that the 11 witnesses give their statements in camera in the trial of Hasanah who is facing a criminal breach of trust (CBT) charge involving US\$12.1mil.

Counsel Hamdan Hamzah, who is representing Hasanah, said the defence was against the application as the prosecution did not provide sufficient evidence to say that national security would be threat-

ened if the 11 witnesses gave their statements in open court.

"In their affidavit, the prosecution opined that foreign relations would be affected if the trial was held in open court.

"But we find no evidence to prove the statements of witnesses would be manipulated as the affidavit on foreign relations is only speculation," he said.

He said if the prosecution wanted

11 witnesses to give their statement in camera, they needed to provide evidence and the court would decide.

After hearing arguments from both sides, Judicial Commissioner Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh set tomorrow for a decision on the application.

The court will commence trial tomorrow, regardless of whether the application is dismissed or allowed," said Ahmad Shahrir.

The court had earlier set the trial dates in October.

On Oct 25, 2018, Hasanah, 62, pleaded not guilty to a charge of committing CBT amounting to US\$12.1mil in funds belonging to the government when serving as the director-general of the Prime Minister's Department Research Division.

She was charged with committing the offence at the office of the Research Division in the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya between April 30 and May 9, 2018.

Hasanah was charged under Section 409 of the Penal Code which provides for a maximum of 20 years' jail and whipping as well as fine if found guilty. — Bernama

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Former ministry aide probed for alleged bribery

PUTRAJAYA: A former principal assistant secretary of a ministry is being probed for allegedly accepting bribes over a RM118mil tender awarded by the ministry.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has found RM85,000 in the possession of the 42-year-old man and is actively

tracking the money trail.

"We believe there is more (money) and we are looking for it," said a source familiar with the case.

The man, now a director of a training institute, is believed to have received the bribes from companies supplying fertiliser to the ministry.

"We believe the tender awarded

to the companies which belonged to the same individual is worth RM118mil," said the same source.

The tender to supply the fertiliser to the ministry was for two years – 2019 and this year.

The man was detained on Monday night when he turned up at the MACC office for questioning.

He was brought to the Magistrate's Court and the MACC has obtained a seven-day remand order on him.

Investigations are being carried out under Section 16 (a)(b) of the MACC Act.

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

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'We have the evidence'

Prosecution to prove former spy chief committed CBT of RM50mil

KUALA LUMPUR: The prosecution will prove that former Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation (MEIO) director-general Datuk Hasanah Abdul Hamid had committed criminal breach of trust (CBT) of US\$12.1mil (RM50.4mil) in funds belonging to the government to, among others, buy luxury watches.

"Evidence will be brought to show how the accused had fraudulently misappropriated the money by instructing her officers to purchase six luxury watches," said deputy public prosecutor Muhammad Iskandar Ahmad.

The prosecution will also submit evidence to show she had received the money from outside parties on April 30, 2018 when she was the director-general of the Research Division at the Prime

Minister's Department.

"The prosecution will also show that the accused made a payment to a third party by taking out the balance of the money from the Research Division office without handing it over to the Malaysian government or the division," he said on the first day of the trial before judicial commissioner Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh.

Muhammad Iskandar said the prosecution would present evidence that would show Hasanah had committed a CBT with the property.

"The prosecution will show that money was given for a special purpose, but it was not carried out by the accused which resulted in a loss of US\$12.1mil to the Malaysian government.

"Evidence will also show that the accused had failed to comply with all legal provisions, including the Treasury Instructions, with respect to the management of receiving financial contributions from outside parties.

"The accused also never handed over the money she received to the Malaysian government or the Research Division," he added.

Muhammad Iskandar said the prosecution would also rely on the presumption under Section 409B of the Penal Code to prove that the accused had fraudulent intentions in misusing the money.

"In proving the case against the accused, the prosecution will rely on direct, circumstantial and documentary evidence to show that the offence was committed by the

accused on the date, time and place as contained in the charge," Muhammad Iskandar said.

On Oct 25, 2018, Hasanah, 62, pleaded not guilty to a charge of committing CBT amounting to US\$12.1mil (RM50.4mil) in funds belonging to the government when serving as the director-general of the Prime Minister's Department Research Division.

She was charged with committing the offence at the office of the Research Division in the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya between April 30 to May 9, 2018.

She was charged under Section 409 of the Penal Code which provides for a maximum of 20 years jail and whipping, as well as a fine, if found guilty. — Bernama

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By VIJENTHI NAIR
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DISGRUNTLED owners of the Malaysia Civil Servants Housing Programme (PPAM) Melinjau project in Presint 11, Putrajaya, hope their complaints on defects in their units and surroundings will be addressed soon.

This was after newly minted Putrajaya Corporation (PjC) president Datuk Muhammad Azmi Mohd Zain visited the site and assured them that he would talk to the relevant authorities to find a solution.

He ordered PjC officers to gather all the complaints and categorise them into three main segments — common areas, safety concerns and individual units.

"We will talk to the Housing and Local Government Ministry and the developer on how to solve the problems.

"Our priority is to identify the issues and estimate the cost of rectification.

"PjC officers have also written to the Works Ministry asking for its expertise on the structures to ensure that they are truly safe for

PjC to find solution for homeowners

occupancy," he said.

Muhammad Azmi added that there were many complaints about shoddy workmanship, which could be fixed immediately, provided the structures were safe.

Melinjau PPAM Residents Association president Fakrullah Ismail said the owners were frustrated at the long list of housing defects.

He said the construction of the building was a rushed job.

"The appointed contractors did try to remedy the defects in some of the units following the complaints.

"However, many residents were not satisfied with the work as it was only a temporary fix," said Fakrullah.

He added that other complaints included poor placement of poles and pillars, haphazard plastering, cracked walls, poor materials, incomplete piping and drainage systems as well as leakage.

Developer Jaya Zira Sdn Bhd project manager Effendi Mohd Yusof,

who was present during Muhammad Azmi's visit, said they were facing financial difficulties to carry out the repairs as the disbursement of the Facilitation Fund by the Federal Government was held back.

Effendi said the company was supposed to receive RM21mil as per the fund agreement after delivery of vacant possession.

"We received the Certificate of Completion and Compliance in July last year and the vacant possession was delivered in phases the next month but we have yet to receive due payment.

"We need the money to conduct the repairs.

"But despite the delay in payment, we have repaired over 500 out of a total 650 units, out of which more than 366 units owners have signed the repair completion forms.

"I was told that a new supplementary agreement to the original Facilitation Fund Agreement would be made to formulate a new disbursement method," he said.



(Right)
Muham
Azmi a
City Pl
deputy
preside
Datuk I
Mak Uj
looking
the blo
drainag
system
Melinja
PPAM
carpark
Looking
are unit
owners

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Lawyer freed of two CBT charges

Court: Accused was careless – not corrupt

By VENESA DEVI
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JOHOR BARU: A lawyer walked away a free man after the High Court here found him not guilty of two charges of criminal breach of trust.

Ibrahim Haikal Razak was sentenced to three years' jail with two strokes of the rotan by a Sessions Court here in July last year for not handing over the money he received from two clients to the law firm he was representing.

In allowing the lawyer's appeal yesterday, High Court judge Justice Abu Bakar Katar said the prosecution failed to prove that the 36-year-old accused had committed an act of criminal breach of trust.

"Throughout the trial, they had failed to prove that the accused had kept the money for his own use, which was the basis for the two charges."

"The accused's job offer letter does not stop him from accepting money from the individuals."

"The document also does not indicate the money received by the accused needed to be handed over to the firm within a certain frame of time," he said.

He added the court viewed this as a carelessness on the part of the

accused for failing to hand the money over but it is not under the purview of a criminal breach of trust, especially as the money was not kept for personal use.

"The court allows the appeal as the prosecution had failed to prove that the accused had committed a criminal breach of trust."

"The court hereby acquits and discharges him," he said.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Faizal Amrin Noor Hadi prosecuted the case while the accused was represented by lawyers G. Subramaniam Nair and M. Manian.

He was previously charged at the Johor Baru Sessions Court with two



Victory sign: Ibrahim Haikal walks away a free man after the High Court found him not guilty of CBT.

charges for accepting almost RM18,000 from two defendants in a civil suit.

He was then acting for the plaintiff, an educational firm, in the suit.

Ibrahim was accused of accepting the money as an inducement to settle the matter.

He allegedly accepted RM7,600 from a 37-year-old woman and another RM10,325.80 from a 39-year-old woman in two separate

locations in Johor Baru in January and February of 2014, respectively.

He was charged under Section 409 of the Penal Code with committing criminal breach of trust, which is punishable by up to 20 years in prison, whipping and a fine, if convicted.

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com



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'Charges soon on Mara's property purchase in Australia'

PUTRAJAYA: The case of Majlis Amanah Rakyat's (Mara) property purchase in Melbourne will be taken to court soon, said anti-graft chief Datuk Seri Azam Baki, hinting that one of the individuals who may be charged is now residing in Sabah.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner said the deputy public prosecutor had agreed in principle to charge those involved.

"One of the individuals to be charged is said to be residing in Sabah and is in quarantine."

"So, we need to arrange for the right time to charge those involved," he said in an interview over its in-house radio station MACC.fm.

However, Azam did not mention how many people would be taken to court over the scandal.

Insisting that the commission was not protecting anyone involved in this case, MACC, he said, was firm and focused in its probe.

"We are just waiting for the time to charge," he added.

Previous reports claimed that Mara had overpaid by A\$4.75mil (RM14.14mil) for the Dudley International House.

Australian authorities had recently seized properties and cash totalling A\$1.6mil (RM4.8mil) from a man said to be a Malaysian living in



Easy identification: In this filepic, a MACC suspect is in orange remand attire. Azam says investigation officers are given the discretion to decide if a suspect has to wear the orange garb, mainly for identification purposes.

Australia and who had been accused of bribing a Malaysian official to secure Mara's purchase of the multimillion-dollar apartment complex in Melbourne in 2013.

The Dudley property scandal was first highlighted by the Australian media, which led to the revelation

of other properties said to have also been bought at inflated prices.

On the issue of taking MACC suspects in the orange lock-up outfit to court for remand, Azam said there were reasons why they were made to wear it, adding that investigation officers were given the discretion to

decide on this.

"I would like to settle this once and for all. I would like to ask, what is the problem with the baju oren (orange attire)?"

"Police also make suspects wear the remand attire. Their suspects are handcuffed, too. But this has not been turned into a polemic (issue)," he said.

Azam was responding to questions if it was right for MACC to put suspects going to court for remand in the orange garb and handcuffs.

"I know some people are talking about human rights. But we must also consider the rights of the people who demand that the MACC officers carry out their duties well and effectively," said Azam.

He said in some cases, investigation officers might feel it is necessary to put suspects in lock-up attire when they are taken to court for remand.

"Bear in mind that on most occasions, there would be other enforcement agency officers taking their suspects to court for remand applications."

"If they were not in the orange suit, it would be hard to identify the suspects," he pointed out.

Those detained by MACC and held in its lock-ups must put on the suit, also for easy identification.

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Identification of exhibits in Hasanah's trial put off

KUALA LUMPUR: The identification of monies and luxury watches seized in the criminal breach of trust case of former Malaysian External Intelligence Organisation (MEIO) director-general Datuk Hasanah Abdul Hamid could not be done in the High Court.

DPP Ahmad Farid Ahmad Kamal said the prosecution's first witness, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Asst Supt Muhammad Nizhar Kadi was supposed to identify the case exhibits in court yesterday.

However, he said the items which

were kept in a safe, could not be presented in court as the person in charge was not around.

On the first day of the trial two days ago, the prosecution informed the court that the first witness of the prosecution would be called again yesterday to identify the case exhibits.

Muhammad Nizhar in his testimony on Tuesday said the MACC conducted the operation code-named "Ops Dinar 2" to investigate allegations that some officers in the Research Division of the Prime Minister's Department misappropriated millions of ringgit in government funds and kept them in several locations.

He said in the operation, the MACC seized US\$4.07mil in cash from the Shaftsbury Residence in Cyberjaya and a bag containing RM220,000 in Kuala Terengganu on Aug 30, 2018.

DPP Muhammad Iskandar Ahmad in his opening speech on Tuesday said the prosecution would prove that Hasanah had committed CBT involving US\$12.1mil (RM50.4mil) in funds, some of which was used to purchase six luxury watches.

On Oct 25, 2018, Hasanah, 62, pleaded not guilty to the charge of committing the offence between April 30 and May 9 at her office in the Prime Minister's Department Complex in Putrajaya.

Hasanah is charged under Section 409 of the Penal Code which provides a maximum jail term of 20 years and whipping and a fine upon conviction.

The trial before Judicial Commissioner Datuk Ahmad Shahrir Mohd Salleh continues on Monday. — Bernama

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Hunt on for employers who falsify claims on wage subsidy

By M. MAGESWARI
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KUALA LUMPUR: The Social Security Organisation (Socso) is on a nationwide hunt for unscrupulous employers who make false claims in relation to the Wage Subsidy Programme (PSU).

Its chief executive officer Datuk Seri Dr Mohammed Azman Aziz Mohammed said they had identified a 33-year-old managing director from the services industry in Selangor who falsified documents of the company's income to enjoy the government's initiative.

PSU, which was implemented on April 1, was announced by the government as part of its economic stimulus package to help employers to continue operations without laying off their workers.

He revealed that the company managing director had claimed for 185 workers and that payment of RM415,000 was made to the company.

He said they had identified 30 cases of false claims in relation to the wage subsidy.

Of the figure, eight cases were in Kedah, six in Selangor, five in Kuala Lumpur, three in Perak, two each in Johor and Pahang, and one each in Kelantan, Sarawak, Sabah and Penang.

"We will bring our information to the police and Malaysian Anti-



Corruption Commission (MACC) for further action," he told reporters at Menara Perkeso in Jalan Ampang yesterday.

"We hope they will come forward or face the music. Socso will not compromise with any employer or party who makes fraudulent claims on wage subsidy."

To date, Azman said RM11.8bil wage subsidy payments had been made to 322,022 employers.

"Socso as the implementing organisation for this wage subsidy and other incentives announced by the government, is concerned that

there are certain quarters who take advantage of the pure intention of the government to assist employers and workers.

"If they have made inaccurate claims, did not follow the criteria, did not channel the funds to qualified workers, or applied using incorrect information, we urge them to come forward voluntarily, and surrender any payment that they have received."

"If they have received the wage subsidy but did not channel it to the worker, it is an offence," he said.

"You have to be truthful, if your

income did not drop by 50%, do not amend your income (statement) and make a wrong claim over this."

Azman said they found there were employers who submitted claims to enjoy wage subsidy using inaccurate information.

"We don't want to accuse anybody of cheating but if they do not have the intention to deceive, or they overlooked or made wrong assumptions with available information, please refund the money," he said.

He said Socso received 281 complaints from workers stating that

the payment applied by those employers did not reach them.

The complaints, he added, involved Employment Retention Programme (ERP), PSU and hiring incentives.

He said there were also complaints from workers who did not get employment retention allowances.

"We will investigate all these complaints and refer the findings to the authorities for further action," he said.

"We hope that employers will understand that if they abuse this system, we will identify them and take action."

Azman said Socso through its officers from the internal audit division and anti-fraud branch would work with the authorities to ensure those employers would face legal proceedings accordingly.

"We want to share the information with the authorities to take action under the Penal Code and the MACC Act."

"Employers can call us or email information to ceo@perkeso.gov.my or come to any of 53 Socso offices to co-operate with us or refund if they do not have the right to claim these incentives," he added.

Also present at the press conference were Socso anti-fraud branch chief Hasnol Mohamed Hussein and Socso Internal Audit Division chief Azirruan Ariffin.

Don't deceive:
Azman (centre), together with Azirruan (left) and Hasnol at the press conference held at Menara Perkeso, Kuala Lumpur, said Socso will be investigating claims of unscrupulous employers.

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DPP held over alleged RM345,000 bribe

PUTRAJAYA: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has remanded a deputy public prosecutor on the suspicion of receiving bribes amounting to RM345,000.

The man is said to have demanded the money from a Datuk.

Sources said the money was "reward" for settling a cheating case involving land sales transaction back in 2016.

However, graft investigators were tight-lipped when asked for more information on the case.

The suspect was brought before a magistrate yesterday, where he was ordered to be remanded for six days while investigators probe the case.

MACC is investigating the case under Section 19 (a) (4) of the MACC Act.

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Prosecution to amend two charges against Lim

By **NURBAITI HAMDAN**
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KUALA LUMPUR: The prosecution will be amending two out of four charges against former Penang chief minister Lim Guan Eng in his corruption case involving the Penang undersea tunnel project.

Deputy public prosecutor Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin informed Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi that the prosecution would submit the amendment on Oct 28 with Lim being present.

The next mention date for the case has been fixed on Oct 28.

Lim, 60, was excused from yesterday's proceeding as he had to attend the Penang state assembly sitting.

Azura also allowed Wan Shaharuddin's application for the trial dates to be decided on the same day.

Lim was represented by lawyer Gobind Singh Deo.

On Aug 7, the DAP lawmaker claimed trial at a Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court to a charge for soliciting gratification to help a company to secure the Penang undersea tunnel project.

He was accused of requesting

10% of the profits from Datuk Zarul Ahmad Mohd Zulkifli, a director at Consortium Zenith Construction Sdn Bhd, as a bribe to get the contract for the project.

Lim was alleged to have committed the offence nearby The Gardens Hotel at Lingkaran Syed Putra, Mid Valley City here in March 2011.

On Aug 10, he was charged for the second time at the Butterworth Sessions Court for corruption amounting to RM3.3mil, as an inducement for helping Zarul Ahmad's company secure the undersea tunnel project, valued at RM6.3mil.

On Sept 11, the Bagan MP was charged again on two counts of causing two plots of land belonging to the Penang government worth RM208.8mil to be disposed of to two companies, which are linked to the state's undersea tunnel project.

He was alleged to have committed the offences at the Penang Land and Mines Office, Level 21, Komtar, on Feb 17, 2015, and March 22, 2017.

Watch the video
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'Zahid knew source of money'

Executive: Ex-DPM used welfare fund to pay off his credit cards

KUALA LUMPUR: Former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi was aware that repayments for his credit cards were made using Yayasan Akalbudi's cheques, the High Court was told.

Ahmad Zahid's former executive secretary, Mejar Mazlina Mazlan @ Ramly said her former employer knew that she used the foundation's cheques to pay for his credit cards because he had given her permission to do so.

"Datuk Seri Zahid also never retracted the instruction (to use Akalbudi Foundation's cheques to make payments for credit cards).

"Every time I gave the cheques to Ahmad Zahid, I also gave him the payment statements," she said during re-examination by deputy public prosecutor Datuk Raja Rozela Raja Toran on the 43rd day of the Umno president's trial.

To another question by Raja Rozela whether there were other

documents she showed to Ahmad Zahid, she said it was Yayasan Akalbudi's Maybank cheque book.

Mazlina, who is the 90th prosecution witness, when questioned by DPP Lee Keng Fatt on the amount of funds in Yayasan Akalbudi's account between June 2016 until she quit as Ahmad Zahid's executive secretary in 2018, said it was tens of thousands to millions.

Lee: Did you show the bank statement to Datuk Seri Zahid?

Mazlina: I did

Lee: How often?

Mazlina: Datuk Seri Zahid made 'spot check' one or twice a year.

Ahmad Zahid, 67, is facing 47 charges, with 12 of them involving criminal breach of trust, eight for corruption and 27 for money laundering involving tens of millions of ringgit in funds belonging to Yayasan Akalbudi.

The hearing before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues today. — Bernama



Supporters in tow: Ahmad Zahid and his entourage walking to the courtroom for his case at the KL High Court.

The Star | 16 Oktober 2020 | Page: 10

Ex-aide denies graft charges

Mat Sabu's political secretary hit with five counts involving RM6.3mil

By NURBAITI HAMDAN
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KUALA LUMPUR: A former political secretary to an ex-defence minister has claimed trial at the Sessions Court here to five counts of graft involving more than RM6.3mil.

Mohd Azhar Che Mat Dali, 49, allegedly solicited and received the sum as bribery for a contract tied to the ministry.

The father of seven pleaded not guilty after the charges were read out to him before Sessions Court judge Azura Alwi here yesterday.

At the time of the alleged offences, Mohd Azhar was still the political secretary to Mohamad Sabu, who was the defence minister then.

Mohamad Sabu, who is president of Parti Amanah Negara, is better known as Mat Sabu.

According to the first charge, he allegedly solicited RM5mil from one Elias Jemadi Tajudin, a managing director at FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd, as a reward to assist FEHM Entity to be chosen as the strategic partner and contractor for maintenance of the ministry's intelligence system.

He allegedly committed the offence at a boutique hotel in Jalan Ampang on July 22 last year.

For the second to the fifth charges, Azhar allegedly received RM425,000, RM175,000, RM250,000 and RM500,000 from Elias, through Elias himself as well as two other middlemen, as a reward to assist

FEHM Entity for the same purpose.

The offences were allegedly committed in Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur – including the parking lot of the defence minister's residence at Jalan Bellamy between September last year and February this year.

The charges were framed under Section 16(a)(B) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009 and the accused faces up to 20 years imprisonment and fine of no less than five times the amount of gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if convicted.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Mahadi Abdul Jumaat from the MACC proposed RM500,000 bail for all five charges.

"RM500,000 is not an excessive

bail amount as the amount involved was RM6.3mil. And the accused does not have the right to automatic bail," he said.

Azhar's lawyer Ariff Azami Hussein pleaded for minimum bail on grounds that his client had been unemployed since the first movement control order (MCO) in March.

He said Azhar was not a flight risk and had given full cooperation to the authorities.

"He would not abscond as he lives with his family and has two school-going children. He could only raise RM30,000 for bail as he was informed about the charging on Wednesday," Ariff said.

Judge Azura then fixed bail at RM300,000 in two sureties.

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WORLD
MARKETS

FBM KLCI (Oct 16)
-10.11 (1,503.84)

STI (Oct 16)
+9.40 (2,533.02)

DJIA (Oct 15)
-19.80 (28,494.20)

FTSE 100 (Oct 15)
-102.54 (5,832.52)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020 • NewStraitsTimes

Exchange rate (Oct 16)
US\$1=RM4.147

Brent Oil
US\$42.61*

*AT PRESS TIME

BUSINESS

POTENTIAL WHITE KNIGHT

PERSPECTIVE LANE TO FGV'S RESCUE?

Syed Mokhtar-owned company eyeing 20pc stake in planter via asset injection

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FGV Holdings Bhd can be rejuvenated with the potential entry of Perspective Lane (M) Sdn Bhd as a major shareholder, said a source.

Perspective Lane, a company owned by businessman Tan Sri Syed Mokhtar Albukhary's Restu Jernih Sdn Bhd, has made an offer to inject its plantation assets into FGV in return for a sizeable stake in the latter.

"It is an opportune time for FGV to turn around its business and return its focus to the core palm oil plantation business," the source told the *New Straits Times*.

He added that ever since FGV's listing in 2012, the company had mostly been incurring losses despite endless efforts to diversify its revenue stream.

"This deal will give FGV the opportunity to bounce back after having failed to generate profit for shareholders for most years since its listing eight years ago."

In an exchange filing yesterday, FGV said Perspective Lane intended to participate in the company via an injection of plantation assets in exchange for shares.

If accepted, Perspective Lane will become the single largest shareholder of FGV.

A business daily, quoting sources, reported that Syed Mokhtar was eyeing a 20 per cent

stake in FGV.

Perspective Lane owns the Tradewinds group of companies, including Tradewinds Plantation Bhd and Central Sugars Refinery Sdn Bhd, the same businesses that FGV is involved in.

Following the news of Syed Mokhtar's interest, FGV's shares rose as much as eight sen, or 7.48 per cent, to RM1.15 yesterday before ending 0.4 sen, or 3.74 per cent, higher at RM1.11.

The stock had traded at RM5.32 when it was listed on June 29, 2012.

FGV has diversified into, among others, logistics, information and communication technology under FGV Prodata Systems Sdn Bhd, hospitality under

Felda Travel Sdn Bhd and the sugar business under the listed MSM Malaysia Holdings Bhd over the years.

For the six months ended June

30, MSM posted a net loss of RM56.26 million compared with a net loss of RM74.39 million in the same period a year ago.

Revenue fell marginally to RM959.58 million from RM959.84 million previously.

Besides that, FGV had in February also diversified into the dairy farming

and fresh milk processing business with its acquisition of a 60 per cent stake in the enlarged share capital of RedAgri Farm Sdn Bhd for RM10 million. RedAgri owns the Bright Cow

brand of dairy products.

The source said the important question now was on what could be done to realise FGV's true potentials.

The higher crude palm oil (CPO) price had made the potential FGV sale more palatable, the source added.

"In the end, the board must place priority on protecting the interest of FGV's shareholders, the smallholders as well as the public," he added.

CPO's three-month futures price had climbed to RM2,826 a tonne yesterday from a low of RM1,962 in May.

For the six months ended June 30, FGV's net loss widened to RM121.8 million from RM55.57 million previously.

Group revenue fell 7.3 per cent to RM6.08 billion from RM6.56 billion previously due to higher losses registered in its plantation business.

It is an opportune time for FGV to turn around its business and return its focus to the core palm oil plantation business.

SOURCE

BULKING FACILITIES

FGV adds 6 storage tanks for vegetable oil in Pasir Gudang, Port Klang

KUALA LUMPUR: FGV Holdings Bhd has expanded its bulking facilities by adding six new vegetable oil storage tanks in Selangor and Johor.

FGV, one of the world's largest crude palm oil (CPO) producers, said the expansion was to meet increasing demand and fulfil the government's B20 biodiesel mandate for the transport sector.

The company operates its bulking and storage business through subsidiary FGV Johor Bulkiers Sdn Bhd (FJB).

Group chief executive officer Datuk Haris Fadzilah Hassan said the additional tanks attested to

the team's expertise in handling edible and non-edible vegetable oil products.

"It is complemented by a fully computerised system, stringent quantity and quality controls, strict security and safety measures and comprehensive receipt-storage-despatch facilities."

"FJB is one of the most well-equipped terminals to handle all types of storage and cargo movement needs. Moving forward, we plan to expand its bulking business overseas and we are exploring the best options available," said Haris Fadzilah in a statement yesterday.



Four of the new tanks are located in Pasir Gudang with 10,400 tonnes of capacity completed in August and two in Port Klang with 5,200 tonnes of capacity completed in February.

Meanwhile, FGV said nine additional tanks in Tanjung Langsat, Johor, with 20,000 tonnes of capacity, were under construction and would be completed by the third quarter of next year.

FGV owns 12 liquid terminals in

Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan — one of the world's largest and most modern network of storage facilities for vegetable oils — with a total capacity of more than 1.1 million tonnes.

FJB handles 25 per cent of Malaysia's total palm oil exports and provides ample tank space solutions for international vegetable oil traders to effectively conduct business worldwide.

Last year, it marked a historical moment by venturing into the

handling of basic chemicals in line with its strategy to expand the group's business beyond vegetable oils.

FJB expects to handle more than 80,000 tonnes of basic chemicals annually at its dedicated facilities in Tanjung Langsat, Johor, next year.

It also operates two warehouses in Pasir Gudang and Kuantan for the storage of palm kernel expellers, palm kernel shells and grains.

FGV Holdings Bhd owns 12 liquid terminals in Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan, with a total capacity of more than 1.1 million tonnes.

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Court acquits firm director of extorting Sunway tycoon charge

PETALING JAYA: A company director was acquitted of a charge of extorting RM5mil from Sunway Group chairman Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah after the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC) decided not to pursue the case.

On Feb 27, 2019, Cheah Chyuan Yong, 39, pleaded not guilty at the Magistrate's Court to the charge of extorting the Sunway chairman by

threatening to make public a letter from the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

The offence was allegedly committed with the aim to prompt him to hand over a sum of money to one Beh Chun Chuan and to settle all the accused's debt with Sunway Leasing Sdn Bhd totalling RM5mil.

The offence was allegedly committed at Sunway Pyramid on

Oct 12, 2018.

Chyuan Yong was charged under Section 385 of the Penal Code, which carries a maximum jail term of seven years, a fine or whipping or with any two of such punishments, upon conviction.

Lawyer Datuk Hazizah Kassim said the Magistrate's Court had on June 16 ordered his client to be discharged not amounting to an

acquittal (DNAA) following the defence's application for a release order after the Sunway chairman, who is the prosecution witness and the complainant in the case, failed to present himself to testify at the trial.

"On Aug 4, 2020, we wrote to the Attorney General asking for the accused to be acquitted and discharged as his DNAA status allows

him to be re-charged in the future," she said.

She said they received a letter from the AGC dated Oct 7 confirming that based on the excuses given in their representation, the AGC would not pursue the case.

The letter was signed by AGC's General Crimes and Public Order Unit head Yusaini Amer Abdul Karim, she added. — Bernama

The Star | 24 Oktober 2020 | Page: 10

Ex-political aide slapped with more graft charges

SHAH ALAM: An ex-political aide to a former Pakatan Harapan minister was slapped with another two graft-related charges at the Sessions Court here.

Mohd Azhar Che Mat Dali, 49, who was political secretary to Parti Amanah Negara president and former Defence Minister Mohamad Sabu claimed trial to both charges.

He is charged under Section 16(a) (B) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009 for both offences.

If found guilty, he faces a maximum imprisonment of 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the amount of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

In the first charge, he is accused of receiving RM50,000 from one Elias Jemadi Tajudin, who is managing director of Aqsa Solution Sdn Bhd.

The alleged bribe was for helping FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd, for which Elias Jemadi is also the managing director, to be chosen as strategic partner and maintenance contractor for the Defence Ministry's intelligence system.

Mohd Azhar allegedly committed the offence in his official vehicle at the VIP lane at KLIA in August last year.

For the second charge, he is accused of accepting RM80,000 from Elias Jemadi through one Zainudin Abdul Majid who is managing director of Ikaira Resources.

Mohd Azhar allegedly committed the crime at the Kota Damansara Driving Range in Petaling Jaya late last year.

DPP Mahadi Abdul Jumaat asked for bail to be set at RM30,000 with one surety as well as for Mohd Azhar to report himself at the Putrajaya MACC office at the beginning of every month.

Mohd Azhar's defence counsel Ariff Azami requested the court to set minimum bail given that his client was currently jobless and had a wife, seven children and mother-in-law to support.

Judge Rofiah Mohamad set bail at RM15,000 for both charges and ordered Mohd Azhar to check in at Putrajaya MACC office on the first week of every month.

She also set Nov 27 for case management.

The Star | 28 Oktober 2020 | Page: 3

Retired officer charged with graft

Mindef cyber warfare chief among three accused of soliciting RM500,000 bribe

By NURBAITI HAMDAN
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KUALA LUMPUR: Three men, including a retired high-ranking army officer, from the Defence Ministry (Mindef) have been charged at a Sessions Court here with corruption involving more than half a million ringgit relating to a maintenance contract linked to the ministry.

Lt. Kol. Che Ahmad Idris, 54; Brig Jen Mohammed Feizol Anuar Ayob, 50, and Lt. Jen (R) Datuk Sheikh Mokhsin Sheikh Hassan, 59, pleaded not guilty after all of their charges were read out, separately, before Sessions Court judge Sabariah Othman yesterday.

Che Ahmad, who is the chief of strategic cyber warfare, was slapped with five counts of bribery.

He was charged with one count of soliciting RM500,000 and a second count of agreeing to the sum from FEHM Entity Sdn Bhd managing director Elias Jemadi Tajudin as an inducement for him to recommend FEHM Entity to be appointed for the maintenance of the ministry's intelligence system through direct negotiations.

For the third until fifth charges, Che Ahmad allegedly received RM50,000, RM30,000 and RM25,000 from Elias, for the same purpose.

The offences were allegedly committed between September 2019 and April 7.

Feizol, who was charged in his then capacity as the army adviser to the Defence Minister, also faces five counts of his own.

He was accused of corruptly receiving RM10,000, RM50,000, RM30,000, RM20,000 and RM18,000 from Elias between Oct 30, 2009 and June 24.

The monies were said to be an inducement for Feizol to hand over a letter of intent dated Sept 5, 2018 from FEHM Entity to Mindef on a

strategic partnership for the maintenance of the ministry's intelligence system.

Former defence intelligence director-general Sheikh Mokhsin was accused of seven counts of corruption.

For the first and second charges, he allegedly solicited and corruptly agreed to receive RM1mil from Elias as an inducement for him to approve the recommendation of FEHM Entity being appointed via direct negotiations for the maintenance of the intelligence system.

For the third until sixth charges, Sheikh Mokhsin allegedly corruptly received RM70,000, RM26,000, RM100,000, RM70,000, from Elias for the same purpose.

All of the offences were allegedly committed at the Havana Club in Concorde Hotel, an office in Mindef and HairDoc Medical Publika between June 20, 2019 and June 5.

Unrelated to the other charges, Sheikh Mokhsin is also facing a seventh charge where he allegedly received RM50,000 from one Syed Omar Syed Mohamad as a reward for appointing Malvus Sense Sdn Bhd for the procurement, supply, delivery, training and certification of a system in Mindef.

The offence was allegedly committed at Mindef at 2.30pm on June 26.

The court set RM80,000 bail in one surety for Che Ahmad, RM60,000 for Feizol and RM110,000 for Sheikh Mokhsin, and also ordered them to surrender their passports.

The case is fixed for mention on Nov 27.

Lawyers Gooi Soon Seng, Azrul Zulkifli Stork and P.G. Cyril represented Che Ahmad, Feizol and Sheikh Mokhsin respectively.

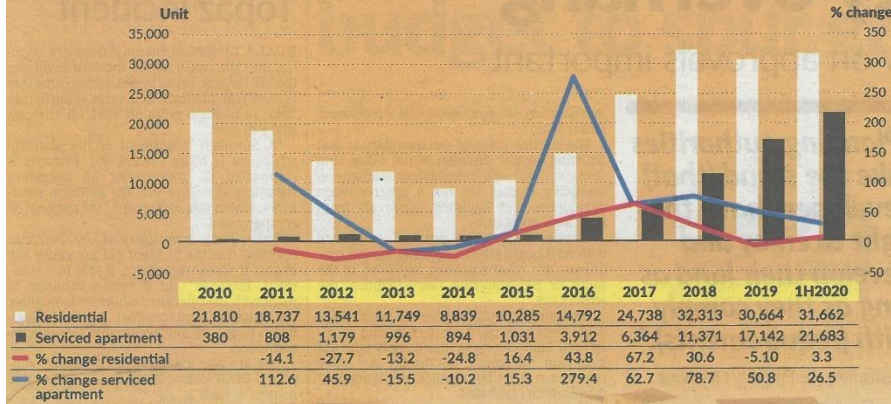
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TheStarTV.com



THE STAR, FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER 2020

StarBiz

Residential and serviced apartment overhang trend



Source: Nasic

The Star graphics

Over supply: Loopholes that lead to property overhang. > See page 2

FGV eyes RM4.3bil to end Felda lease

Agro giant expects LLA termination done in 18 months

CORPORATE

SETALING JAYA: FGV Holdings Bhd is expecting a compensation of between RM3.5bil and RM4.3bil from the termination of the land lease agreement (LLA) for 150,733ha of estates owned by the Federal and Development Authority (Felda).

The compensation amount is based on an internal assessment, which will vary depending on FGV's financial performance for 2020 and 2021, in addition to other various factors.

In a statement yesterday, FGV said it had yet to receive a written notice from Felda regarding the termination of the LLA.

"Once FGV receives an official notice from Felda as required under the LLA, FGV will follow the procedures outlined in the LLA to start the process of termination and determine the compensation due to FGV, which will take 18 months to complete," it said.

The Felda-owned estates were leased to FGV for 99 years, beginning Nov 1, 2011.

The termination of the LLA is a move by Felda to increase its earnings from plantation lands.

Under the LLA terms, FGV is to pay Felda RM248mil (based on the hectareage) plus 15% of the operating profit from the LLA land on an annual basis.

From 2012 until 2019, FGV paid Felda a cumulative sum of RM1.96bil in fixed lease payments due to adjustments in hectareage eased, while the profit shared with Felda amounted to a total of RM476.2mil.

FGV noted that its plantation supply chain



Higher income: A Felda estate. The termination of the LLA is a move by Felda to increase its earnings from plantation lands.

make up only 30% of the fresh fruit bunches (FFB) processed at FGV's 68 palm oil mills. "Due to the proximity of the palm oil mill to the LLA estates, we do not foresee any changes to the current FFB supply arrangement."

"The rest of FGV's plantation integrated value chain in the midstream and downstream businesses will remain uninterrupted by the LLA termination exercise," said FGV.

In addition, FGV said its businesses and operations are prepared for the eventuality of the LLA termination.

As such, FGV's overall long-term strategy to further grow and strengthen its high value-add business activities, focusing on food and branded consumer products, remain intact and will potentially be expedited to provide higher returns to shareholders as the

On Wednesday, the Cabinet approved the proposal to terminate Felda's LLA with FGV as well as the issuance of a RM9.9bil sukuk by Felda.

In a statement by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, the other proposals to ensure Felda's recovery also included debt restructuring with financial institutions and increasing the self-reliance of settlers.

The proposals, which are expected to turn Felda's cash flow positive, were recommended based on the findings of a special task force led by Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar tabled during a Cabinet meeting on Oct 14.

As at Aug 28, 2020, Felda's shareholdings in FGV was 21.24% while Felda Asset Holdings Company Sdn Bhd (FAHC) had an equity of 49.48%.

AirAsia X to drop MAHB from RM63bil haircut bid

KUALA LUMPUR: AirAsia X Bhd plans to drop the country's airport operator from its US\$15.3bil (RM63.65bil) debt restructuring plan to expedite discussions with creditors as its cash is running out fast, people with direct knowledge of the matter said.

The budget carrier is seeking to reconstitute the US\$15.3bil of unsecured debt into a principal amount of RM200mil ringgit and have the rest waived.

But Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) filed a lawsuit last week to claim RM78mil owed by AirAsia X and a separate application to be excluded from the restructuring scheme, arguing that its debts were secured.

A source, who was not authorised to speak publicly about the plans, said the legal action against the airline could delay its plan to restructure debt to stave off liquidation.

"Fund-raising is expected to take a couple of months at least so it's imperative for the company to complete restructuring by January or February."

Source

The source said AirAsia X, the long-haul arm of AirAsia Group Bhd, has less than six months of cash left and has been looking to convene a meeting of creditors to vote on the scheme. "It needs to move on and have that meeting as soon as possible," the person said.

"Fund-raising is expected to take a couple of months at least so it's imperative for the company to complete restructuring by January or February."

AirAsia X declined to comment. Airport operator MAHB said on Sunday that its attempt to recover debt from AirAsia X would not derail the airline's scheme. But the legal suit follows similar action taken by another creditor. Aircraft lessor BOC Aviation Ltd filed a lawsuit against AirAsia X and its subsidiary in August to claim US\$23mil (RM95.7mil) in debt and this month applied to intervene in the airline's court application for its scheme.

The airline's restructuring proposal needs approval from creditors holding at least 75% of the total value of the debts, and the source said that the bulk of the figure is linked to future aircraft orders and it gives Airbus SE nearly 75% on its own. "No creditor will want to make a decision if they don't know what the outcome with MAHB is," another source said, adding that MAHB could have the financial stamina for a legal battle but AirAsia X did not.

The source said that the airline was hoping there would be no other new legal action that might impede the proposed creditors' meeting.

Post restructuring, the airline plans to raise up to RM500mil ringgit to restart the company's operations.

The Star | 31 Oktober 2020 | Page: 13

Ministry launches anti-graft plan

Wee: Guidelines geared towards creating culture of rejecting corruption in all forms

PETALING JAYA: The Transport Ministry has launched its Organisational Anti-Corruption Plan (OACP) 2020-2025, which details strategies to prevent and act against any form of graft.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong said the OACP marked the ministry's commitment to the National Anti-Corruption Plan 2019-2023.

"The OACP provides guidelines with detailed strategies and initiatives to detect, prevent and act against any form of graft, corruption, misconduct and fraud that may occur related to the ministry, its agencies and other related stakeholders."

"It is geared towards creating a mindset and culture that rejects corruption in all its forms and embrac-

ing administrative management based on integrity, transparency, accountability, and excellence in service to the rakyat and all our stakeholders," he said in a Facebook post yesterday.

He said the document would be distributed to all agencies and units under the ministry to inculcate professionalism needed to strengthen integrity and accountability, and to reduce fraud, misuse of authority, and graft.

The 82 initiatives in the OACP, Wee said, outlined the steps in eliciting trust and ensuring competence in the services offered by the ministry that address 35 corruption risks.

"The initiatives include processes related to procurement, law enforcement, financial management, and

administrative best practices.

"The main strategies and initiatives under the OACP are formed from risk assessments, disciplinary case records, integrity breaches, internal and external audits, and brainstorming sessions involving all divisions, units, Minister and Deputy Minister's offices, under the guidance of the Malaysian Institute of Integrity throughout the whole process of compiling the OACP," he said.

He also said the ministry secretary-general Datuk Isham Ishak had also signed the ministry's Anti-Corruption Policy statement on Oct 14, which pledged to strengthen the ministry's best practices in service quality towards a holistic improvement of the entire transport ecosystem.



With integrity: Wee (third from right) presenting the OACP 2020-2025 to Isham. Also present are (from left) Transport Ministry deputy secretary-general (management) Datuk Jana Santhiran Muniayan, deputy secretary-general (policy) Normah Osman, Deputy Transport Minister Hasbi Habibollah and the ministry's Integrity Unit head Datuk Tan Kang Sai.