

NEWS PAPER CUTTING ON JANUARY 2021
THE STAR

CONTENT OF DAILY NEWS JANUARY 2021

BIL.	DATE	NEWS	PAGES
1.	05.01.2021	Prasarana: It is not a raid by MACC	2
2.	05.01.2021	Meat Scandal Probe Tightens	2
3.	07.01.2021	Hazem: I'd Hace Refused 1MDB Job Had I Known About Embezzlement	3
4.	08.01.2021	Maqis Officers Held Over Halal Meat Scandal	4
5.	12.01.2021	Cops jailed and fined RM5,000 for accepting Bribe	5
6.	13.01.2021	Immigration Officer Denies Hand In Dirty Dealings	5
7.	15.01.2021	Report Power Abuse, MACC Tells Civil Servants	6
8.	27.01.2021	Immigration Officer Charged With Accepting Bribes	7
9.	27.01.2021	Man Faces 100 More Graft Charges	8
10.	27.01.2021	Kiandee: 60% Of Meat Import AP Holders Are Bumi Firms	9

The Star | 5 Januari 2021 | Page: 2

Prasarana: It is not a raid by MACC

By INTAN FARHANA ZAINUL
intanzainul@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Prasarana Malaysia Bhd has claimed that the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) merely "paid a visit" to its office yesterday morning for "fact-finding".

"It was not a raid, it was fact-finding by MACC over the negative news reported about Prasarana recently," its deputy chief communication and marketing officer Rafizah Amran told a press conference yesterday.

Also present was Prasarana chairman Datuk Seri Tajuddin Abdul Rahman.

Rafizah said Prasarana would cooperate with MACC in its probe.

"No laptops or phones were seized, but they asked for some doc-

uments. It was just a probe.

"This is because some of the allegations about Prasarana were made by prominent people," said Rafizah, who hoped that MACC would help clear the agency's name.

It was reported that former minister Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz had asked MACC to investigate complaints on alleged attempts to appoint new subcontractors for the ongoing LRT3 project.

Meanwhile, Tajuddin said there were also complaints from subcontractors about their contracts with the turnkey contractors which had not been signed yet.

"When we moved from project delivery partners (PDP) to turnkey contractors, we had an agreement that all the contracts signed with Prasarana should be continued by the turnkey contractors," he said,

adding that they should also prioritise local contractors and bumiputera contractors in the LRT3 project.

"As a project owner of LRT3, we (Prasarana) should be involved in the project," he added.

The LRT3 project started in August 2015 with an initial budget of RM10bil to serve two million people along the Bandar Utama-Johar Setia route, before the cost escalated to a whopping RM31.65bil.

It was among several mega infrastructure projects reviewed by the Federal Government after Pakatan Harapan came to power in May 2018.

In July 2018, LRT3 resumed with the final total cost reduced by 47% to RM16.63bil with the turnkey model replacing the PDP model, along with reducing the number of stations, shortening station plat-

forms, reducing the number of trainsets (from 42 to 22), other than shortening them from six-car sets to three-car sets.

The project is expected to be completed in 2024.

"We do keep our eyes and ears open. As the project owner, we want to see the project being successful," Tajuddin said.

He also confirmed that group CEO Muhammad Nizam Alias, who was hired after a prolonged search, had been suspended from duty and that a showcase letter had been given to him.



For business story:
See StarBiz

The Star | 5 Januari 2021 | Page: 4

Meat scandal probe tightens

MACC focusing on import firms, process and corrupt payments

By MAZWIN NIK ANIS
mazwin@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Graft investigators will zoom in on two areas in their probe on frozen meat importing companies which allegedly brought in frozen products without approval, according to sources.

They said investigators would look into the submission of false declarations in Customs Form 1 by the importing companies and agents handling the importation process.

Sources close to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said the other area of investigation was on whether the companies involved made "corrupt payments" via company accounts.

"Investigators are in the midst of collecting information and evidence on the case. Just because the authorities have been silent on the issue does not mean they are not investigating."

"In any investigation, the element of secrecy is important and that is what investigators are doing. Rather than going about making statements, they investigate," a source told *The Star*.

The MACC has so far arrested four people, including two company directors, for alleged corruption in the case of importing frozen meat without approval. The other two suspects are workers.

The arrests were made on Sunday



Under investigation: The four individuals, including two company directors, were remanded for four days by the Magistrate's Court in Johor Baru. — Bernama

and the suspects have been remanded for four days.

Meanwhile, MACC deputy chief commissioner (operations) Datuk Seri Ahmad Khusairi Yahaya said a series of raids had been carried out over the past two weeks on several frozen meat importing companies

operating in Johor.

He said investigators seized import documents dating back to 2015.

"The investigators are going through the documents and company accounts."

"We are in the process of deter-

mining the mastermind and if they received protection from any enforcement officer," he said.

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com



The Star | 7 Januari 2021 | Page: 8

Hazem: I'd have refused 1MDB job had I known about embezzlement

By NURBAITI HAMDAN
nurbaiti@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) chief executive officer Mohd Hazem Abdul Rahman (*pic*) told the High Court he would have refused the position in the company if he had known that money was embezzled from its funds.

He maintained that he had thought the sovereign wealth fund was set up for Umno's benefit as told to him by fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho.

Hazem said Low, better known as Jho Low, told him this during a meeting at Shangri-La Hotel in Putrajaya just before he joined 1MDB as chief operating officer in 2012.

He said former prime minister



Datuk Seri Najib Razak's principal private secretary, the late Datuk Azlin Alias, also joined the meeting.

The 10th prosecution witness, who was under cross-examination by lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, was testifying in the 1MDB trial involving Najib.

Shafee: Did you check whether Jho Low's statement was true? A lot

of people make claims to boast. Jual nama (to name-drop).

Hazem: Well, Azlin was there. He was one of Najib's special officers.

Shafee then retorted that he could neither call nor examine Azlin, as the latter passed away in a helicopter crash in April 2015.

Shafee: That's why I have to ask you. You agree with me that on that day, you had not been absorbed as COO yet. More or less you were being interviewed in the meeting.

Hazem: Yes.

In the same line of questioning, Hazem admitted that he was fully aware that 1MDB was wholly owned by the government.

Shafee: You agree that Umno is not the owner of 1MDB?

Hazem: Yes.

Shafee: Straightaway you must

have told yourself this is dirty business. You are to be made CEO.

Hazem: Yes.

Shafee suggested that something was rotten within the company, to which Hazem replied that he realised the company was "politically linked" based on what Low told him.

Shafee: If Jho Low didn't tell you this, you wouldn't know that 1MDB was created for the benefit of Umno.

Hazem: On that day, I wouldn't know but I would probably know later from my friends.

Shafee: When Jho Low made this statement (about 1MDB and Umno), was Azlin quiet?

Hazem: Yes.

The witness also agreed to the suggestion that money flew out of company funds.

Shafee: You would never have

thought of it, not in your lifetime, that this money would one day be accused of being sent back for Najib's benefit.

Hazem: No (I did not).

Shafee: Why didn't you expect this? Because this scheme is outlandish?

Hazem: Yes, I didn't expect this.

Shafee: And if this (scheme) was communicated to you, you may not accept the appointment?

Hazem: Yes.

Shafee: Why wouldn't you accept the appointment if you knew?

Hazem: Like you said, it was outlandish the way the scheme was undertaken.

Hazem became the CEO of 1MDB in March 2013 before stepping down in January 2015.

The hearing continues today.

The Star | 8 Januari 2021 | Page: 10

Maqis officers held over halal meat scandal

JOHOR BARU: Two Malaysian Quarantine and Inspection Services Department (Maqis) officers have been arrested here in connection with the meat cartel scandal.

The duo, aged 27 and 31, were picked up by Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) officers at about 11pm on Wednesday for alleged bribery involving smuggling of raw frozen food from countries not in the approved list.

Johor Baru Magistrate's Court assistant registrar Nur Izzaty Muhammad Zahari said the two suspects would be remanded for five days.

The case is being investigated under Section 17(a) of the MACC 2009 Act.

Johor MACC director Datuk Azmi Alias confirmed the arrest but declined further comment.

Meanwhile, four people, including a frozen meat importing company director, who were remanded for four days from Monday, were released under MACC bail of RM10,000 each.

The other suspects are an operations director, clerk and director of a wholesale company.

The authorities recently busted a cartel smuggling meat, and repackaging it with a halal logo.

A raid was carried out at a warehouse in Senai, Johor, where 1,500 tonnes of frozen meat worth RM30mil were seized.

The Star | 12 Januari 2021 | Page: 3

Cops jailed and fined RM5,000 for accepting bribe

SHAH ALAM: A police lance corporal and constable were sentenced to 10 days' jail and fined RM5,000 each by the Shah Alam Sessions Court after they pleaded guilty to an optional charge of accepting a bribe from a Thai national in December 2019.

Judge Rozilah Salleh also ordered L/Kpl Shaiful Rizal Osman, 36, and Kons Muhammad Zuhair Mazlan, 28, from the Narcotics Division of the Sungai

Buloh district police headquarters to serve two months in jail if they fail to pay the fine.

She reprimanded both the accused of blindly following orders, saying that as police personnel, they should be able to think whether the instructions they received from their superiors were against the law or not.

"You should not blindly follow orders, you can follow good orders otherwise you do not have to follow

them, you should report if someone asks for bribes, not join them (to accept bribes)," she said in court yesterday.

According to the optional charge, L/Kpl Shaiful Rizal and Kons Muhammad Zuhair were charged with receiving RM3,000 in cash from one Nordin Chebueraheng without any consideration on Dec 24, 2019, between 3.40am and 4am, in relation to their official duties as police personnel.

They were accused of committing the offence at the Kampung Baru Subang police station under Section 165 of the Penal Code which carries a maximum jail term of two years or a fine or both.

Earlier, while pleading for leniency, lawyers Muhammad Amirul Jamaluddin and Mohd Redzuan Mohamed Yusoff said the accused were merely following orders from their superiors.

Muhammad Amirul said the

accused were not involved in asking for bribes from Nordin but were instructed to take and keep the bribe money, and the fear of being reprimanded had forced them to commit the offence.

Deputy public prosecutor Fadhlil Ab Wahab urged the court to impose an apt punishment as it involved public interest and should serve as an example to other public servants to steer away from corruption. — Bernama

The Star | 13 Januari 2021 | Page: 9

Immigration officer denies hand in dirty dealings

By NURBAITI HAMDAN
nurbaiti@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: An Immigration officer has been hauled to court over charges of graft and money laundering amounting to RM230,990 relating to immigration clearance for foreign nationals at the airport.

Yusrarif Wan Yusoh, 42, was charged with five counts of accepting RM300, RM5,000, RM3,000, RM5,000 and RM1,700 himself from two individuals, Voon Pot Lim and Yuen Hon Loong, both of whom have links to the accused's official work involving the passage of Filipino and Chinese nationals through the Immigration counter at

KLIA2 in Sepang, Selangor.

The offences were allegedly committed at the Alliance Islamic Bank in Putrajaya between Oct 28 and Nov 16 last year.

The accused, who was detained during the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission's (MACC) sting operation Ops Selat, pleaded not guilty after the charges were read out before Sessions Court judge Suzana Hussin here yesterday.

The charge under Section 165 of the Penal Code carries imprisonment of up to two years or a fine, or both, upon conviction.

At a separate Sessions Court, Yusrarif also claimed trial before judge Rozina Ayob to a charge of money laundering.

He allegedly accepted RM215,990, which was proceeds from illegal activity, from Yuen and later deposited the monies into Yuen's bank account.

The offence was allegedly committed at the Alliance Islamic Bank in Putrajaya between Feb 27, 2019 and Nov 13, 2020.

Yusrarif faces a maximum 15 years in jail and a fine of five times the amount or RM5mil, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

Judge Suzana fixed bail at RM55,000 for the five counts of graft and one count of money laundering. She also ordered the accused to report to the MACC office monthly.

The case is fixed for mention on Feb 18.

The MACC, with the cooperation of the Immigration Department, had carried out a nationwide blitz codenamed Ops Selat against members of a syndicate.

The syndicate, whose activities were in high demand since the movement control order was imposed in March last year, is believed to have provided "flying passport" services where agents would collect passports belonging to foreign workers and undocumented migrants whose social visit passes had expired.

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com



The Star | 15 Januari 2021 | Page: 2

Report power abuse, MACC tells civil servants

PUTRAJAYA: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has reminded civil servants yet again not to view issues of abuse of power and integrity lightly and be responsible citizens by reporting the matter to them.

MACC chief commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki said civil servants play an important role as whistle-blowers to check power abuse in order to protect the integrity and transparency of the public sector.

"Civil servants should give attention to this because efforts to clean up the negative culture in the public sector must be done internally.

"The MACC urges public servants to open their eyes and ears, and alert the commission of any wrongdoings in their departments because they are the ones who know what is going on there," he said yesterday.

Azam said the Whistleblower Protection Act was in place to protect informants, including against unjust actions by superiors against them, and gave an assurance that MACC would investigate all complaints.

"The message by Public Service director-general Tan Sri Khairul Adib Abd Rahman that civil servants should be mindful of their colleagues to prevent corruption reflects the seriousness and commitment of the civil service in putting a stop to power abuse and corruption.

"It is not a secret that there are officers and staff of the public sector who have integrity issues.

"It is time civil servants work with the MACC to put a stop to corruption in government departments and agencies," said Azam.

Khairul Adib, in his message to civil servants on Wednesday, said they should no longer adopt the "mind your business attitude" but should be mindful of other colleagues, as not doing anything about their corrupt act would be detrimental to the country.

He said the corrupt act committed by a handful of civil servants would smear the image of the majority.

Khairul Adib added that the civil servants should not be afraid or wait for any reward before exposing or lodging a report on misconduct committed by their colleagues or other civil servants.

The Star | 27 Januari 2021 | Page: 5

Immigration officer charged with accepting bribes

SEREMBAN: An Immigration officer has claimed trial to eight counts of accepting bribes totalling RM885,950 from three individuals.

Mohd Shah Ezywan Abd Rahman, 34, pleaded not guilty to the charges after they were read out to him before Sessions Court judge Madiha Harullah.

For the first charge, he is accused of accepting RM72,300 from Mohd Jeffrey Mohd Zain at a bank in Putra Point, Nilai. He allegedly committed the offence between Jan 11, 2017, and Nov 24, 2017.

He was also slapped with six charges of accepting a total of

RM725,250 from Ong Bok Hay at the same bank.

Shah Ezywan allegedly committed the offences between June 4, 2018, and Nov 1, 2020.

For the final charge, he allegedly accepted RM88,400 from Clement Chen Wen Chien between Oct 16, 2018, and Nov 26, 2018, at the same place.

He also claimed trial to four charges of money laundering.

The judge set bail at RM65,000 for all 12 charges and told Shah Ezywan to surrender his passport to the court. The case is fixed for re-mention on Feb 26.

The Star | 27 Januari 2021 | Page: 5

Man faces 100 more graft charges

IPOH: When a marine police staff member was slapped with 43 counts of accepting bribes in the Sessions Court here yesterday, that was only the start.

Zubairi Abdul Mutalib is expected to be charged with 100 more similar counts today.

For the first batch of charges involving more than RM100,000, the 60-year-old corporal pleaded not guilty before judge N. Priscilla Hemamalini.

Since the court proceedings only started at 4pm yesterday, the remaining 101 charges are expected to be read to him today.

It took a court interpreter more than an hour to go through the 43

charges under Section 17 (a) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act. Alternative charges under Section 165 of the Penal Code were also read out to him.

According to the charge sheet, Zubairi, who is an off-shore patrol vessel unit chief attached to the Kampung Acheh Marine Police base in Sitiawan, had received a total of RM146,350 between May 2016 and July 2019 from Lim Mee Lan as an inducement not to take action on the owner of several vessels who had committed offences under the Fisheries Act 1985.

MACC Deputy Public Prosecutor Nurul Wahida Jalaluddin requested for bail to be set at RM40,000.

Lawyer Muhamad Aizat Fakri requested for bail to be set at RM5,000 because his client was only told two days before by MACC that he would be charged, and was unable to get the bail money ready.

"If he is unable to post the high bail amount, I am hoping he will not be kept in a jail due to his age, and the fear of contracting Covid-19 from other inmates," he said, adding that his client is the sole breadwinner of his family.

The judge then set bail at RM25,000 in one surety and fixed today for mention and the other cases to be heard.

Zubairi was unable to post bail and was sent to the MACC lockup.

The Star | 27 Januari 2021 | Page: 2

Kiandee: 60% of meat import AP holders are bumi firms

KUALA LANGAT: About 60% of approved permit (AP) holders involved in meat import are bumiputra companies, says Agriculture and Food Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee.

Among the bumiputra AP holders are Ramly Food Processing Sdn Bhd and Darabif Meat Company which are capable of importing large quantities of meat.

"In terms of the quantity (of

imported meat), it depends on the ability of the company.

"These two companies are able to import meat in large quantities and are able to compete with non-bumiputra companies," he told reporters after a working visit to the area farmers' organisation (PPK) here yesterday.

Kiandee was commenting on the claims made by former Agriculture and Agro-based Industry deputy

minister Datuk Seri Tajuddin Abdul Rahman in the media recently that only 10% of meat-importing AP holders were bumiputra companies.

Meanwhile, commenting on the AP holders blacklisted for violating conditions, Kiandee said his ministry was still waiting for the results of the investigation from the relevant agencies.

"The case related to this meat AP

is being investigated by several agencies, including the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, Royal Malaysia Police, Royal Malaysian Customs and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry."

The Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry is reportedly ready to revoke the companies' AP if they are found to be involved in the frozen meat distribution cartel scandal. — Bernama