

**NEWS PAPER CUTTING ON FEBRUARY 2021**  
**THE STAR**

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## Ex-Mara Inc chief to be charged over property deal

**PUTRAJAYA:** A former Mara Incorporated chairman, believed to have received bribes amounting to RM33.45mil over the purchase of a property in Australia, will face 22 charges tomorrow.

The 65-year-old will be taken to the Kuala Lumpur Sessions Court to face charges in connection with the controversial purchase of Dudley International House in Melbourne by Mara.

Sources close to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said the man, a Datuk, was arrested yesterday at the commission's headquarters to finalise the process of charging him in court.

The individual will face charges under the MACC Act for corruption as well as charges under the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism, Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act.

Sources revealed the individual is believed to have received millions of ringgit in bribes over the purchase of the property.

MACC chief commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki confirmed the arrest of the former Mara Inc chairman.

"Yes, he has been arrested and he will be brought before a corruption court on Friday to face 22 charges" Azam said.

In September last year, Azam added, MACC was looking into the possibility of charging certain individuals over the acquisition of



**Controversial estate:** An image of the Dudley International House in Caulfield, Melbourne as captured on Google Street View.

Dudley House by Mara, following claims that it overpaid up to A\$4.75mil (RM13.8mil) for the student housing facility.

Australian authorities had earlier seized properties and cash totalling A\$1.6mil (RM4.93mil) from a man

accused of bribing a Malaysian official to secure Mara's purchase of a multimillion-dollar apartment complex in Melbourne in 2013.

In July last year, it was reported that Australian federal police had charged one of its citizens, Teen

Boon Lye, with bribing a foreign official and four counts of false accounting relating to the sale.

Dudley International House is a student dormitory located in the East Caulfield suburb, housing Monash University students.



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## Isa Samad sentenced to six years' jail for graft

The former Negri Sembilan menteri besar and Felda chairman is also fined RM15.4mil for soliciting bribes. He has been allowed a stay of execution pending appeal. > See report by NURBAITI HAMDAN on page 2



## Judge: It was 'undeniable'

Isa involved in soliciting more than RM3mil, rules court

By NURBAITI HAMDAN  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad's solicitation for bribes was "activated" by his use of the word salam (greetings) through his former special officer, says the High Court here.

Justice Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali, who found the former Felda chairman guilty of nine counts of graft, said it was undeniable that Isa was involved in soliciting more than RM3mil as kickback to approve Felda's purchase of a hotel in Kuching.

"The request (for bribe) is 'activated' by the accused's salam to Gegasan Abadi Properties Sdn Bhd (GAPSB) board member Ikhwan Zaidel through his former special officer Muhammad Zahid Md Arip.

"The first time this happened was just after the sales and purchase agreement of Merdeka Palace Hotel & Suites (MPHS) was signed and the accused signed a payment order of RM16mil or 10% of the purchase price of MPHS to GAPSB," the judge said in his decision here yesterday.

All this was subsequently followed by the same "salam" from Isa for the next eight transactions, Justice Nazlan added.

"In all nine situations, Muhammad Zahid (the 21st prosecution witness) would hand over the money to the accused when they met at the

Felda chairman's office.

"All this, the court has found that none of the defence witnesses was able to dispute," he added.

Justice Nazlan said Muhammad Zahid's testimony was corroborated by the testimony of Ikhwan (the 16th prosecution witness) as the person who gave the bribe.

"The testimony clearly showed the intention of the money was to be handed over to the accused," he added.

Isa was charged with nine counts of dishonestly receiving gratification for himself, in cash totalling RM3,090,000 from Ikhwan, through Muhammad Zahid, as gratification for helping to approve the purchase of the hotel by Felda Investment Corporation for RM160mil.

All the offences were said to have been committed at Level 49, Menara Felda, Platinum Park, No. 11, Persiaran KLCC near here between July 21, 2014 and Dec 11, 2015.

On the issue of Muhammad Zahid's credibility, the court found no reason for the witness to implicate the accused other than to reveal the truth over the bribes received through him.

"The witness had been the accused's special officer from 2011 until 2016. There was no testimony by the accused to say he had any problems with his ex-special officer throughout that period.

"The accused agreed that the witness was his subordinate who would

carry out his instructions," Justice Nazlan added.

He said Isa's defence was an afterthought, inconsistent and merely a denial without justification.

Prior to sentencing, he took note of the accused's background, administrative record and his political involvement, where the accused had been a menteri besar for two decades and also a Federal Cabinet minister.

"Corruption is a cancer on society that threatens the economy and the country's democratic system," Justice Nazlan added.

The court then sentenced him to six years' jail for each of the nine counts and fined RM15.4mil in default of 18 years in jail for all the charges.

The jail sentences were ordered to run concurrently, which means it is a total of six years in jail.

Isa's lawyer Datuk Salehuddin Saidin asked for a stay of execution on grounds that Isa was elderly.

Deputy public prosecutor Afzainizam Abdul Aziz objected, arguing that Isa had not shown any exceptional circumstance that could warrant a stay.

The court, however, granted a stay of execution pending an appeal but ordered for bail to be increased from RM800,000 to RM1.5mil.

The judge also ordered Isa to report to the police station on the first day of each month until the disposal of the appeal, and for him to post bail by 2pm today.

### Recent high profile convictions

■ July 28, 2020

Datuk Seri Najib Razak became the first former prime minister to be convicted and sentenced to 12 years' jail and fined RM210mil by the Kuala Lumpur High Court for involvement in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandal.



■ Dec 21, 2020

Former Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor convicted and sentenced to 12 months' jail and fined RM2mil by the Kuala Lumpur High Court for involvement in a RM2mil corruption case.



■ Feb 3, 2021

Former Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar and Felda chairman Tan Sri Mohd Isa Abdul Samad convicted and sentenced to six years' jail and fined RM15.4mil by the Kuala Lumpur High Court for graft involving more than RM3mil relating to a hotel purchase in Sarawak.



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# Ex-Mara Inc chief pleads not guilty

Former chairman claims trial to 22 counts of graft and money laundering charges

By NURBAITI HAMDAN  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former Mara Incorporated Sdn Bhd (Mara Inc) chairman Datuk Mohammad Lan Allani (*pic*) has claimed trial at two Sessions Court here to 22 counts of corruption and money laundering amounting to RM20.45mil involving the purchase of a property in Australia.

He pleaded not guilty to all the charges, which were read out separately before judges Azura Alwi and Rozina Ayob here yesterday.

The 65-year-old is facing 17 charges of receiving RM17.45mil from Optimus Capital Sdn Bhd

director Mazrul Haizad Marof as an inducement for him to approve a proposal paper titled "Proposed Acquisition of a Student Accommodation Building and a Commercial Retail Block known as Dudley International House, 7-14 Dudley Street, Caulfield East, Victoria 3145, Melbourne, Australia".

He was also charged with three counts of soliciting a RM3mil bribe from Datuk Ding Pei Chai, the owner of Marinn Property Pte Ltd



and Carlton Pte Ltd, near a residence in Bukit Bandaraya and Connoisseurs Lounge & Restaurant of the KL Golf & Country Club between May and June 2013.

The bribe was an inducement for the accused to expedite the balance payment on stocks purchased between the companies and Mara Inc.

The charges under Sections 16(a) and 17(a) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009 carry a fine of no less than 10

times the value of the bribe, or RM1mil, whichever higher, or imprisonment for up to 20 years, or both, upon conviction.

Lan was accused of two counts of money laundering amounting to RM10mil at CIMB Bank near Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, on Dec 10, 2012.

He was charged under Section 4(1) of the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001, and faces a fine of up to RM5mil or imprisonment up to five years or both, if convicted.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib offered bail at RM400,000 in one surety.

Lan's lawyer Hisyam Teh Poh

Teik asked for the bail to be allowed to be split into two payments.

"My client is unable to produce RM400,000, and he also suffers from heart disease and an injured spine," he said.

The court then allowed the first bail instalment of RM200,000 to be paid yesterday, and the balance before Feb 16.

The court also ordered the accused to surrender his passport until the disposal of the case, which is fixed for mention on April 8.

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# 'It was toe the line or quit'

## Ex-CEO: 1MDB's culture was to follow orders of Jho Low

By NURBAITI HAMDAN  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** It was a culture in troubled sovereign state fund 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) for people to quit the company if they do not follow orders, the High Court heard.

This came from prosecution witness Mohd Hazem Abd Rahman, who was 1MDB's CEO circa 2013.

Hazem was questioned on his witness' statement where he said he did not dare to be truthful about 1MDB's acquisition plans because he feared his career would be jeopardised if he did not support Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who was the prime minister at the time.

In his statement, Hazem spoke of an email thread with instructions from fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, in relation to the acquisition of Genting Sanyen and Tanjong Energy power plants by 1MDB.

In that email thread, he and other colleagues were ordered to add on to Low's answers to the acquisition controversy, raised by the opposition, to make it more convincing.

"Whatever personal view you have, the acquisition (plan) is rather expensive. Those were all the questions that were highlighted by the



**In the dock:** Najib seen at the Jalan Duta court complex as his 1MDB trial resumes in Kuala Lumpur. — RAJA FAISAL HISHAN/The Star

public, particularly the opposition that time.

"You have to follow, you have to give responses that would be acceptable to the public and not the reality of it," the witness said during cross-examination by lawyer Wan Aizuddin Wan Mohammed yesterday.

Hazem said he did not go against the instructions in the email because "Jho Low ran the company".

"I think the amount that was thrown, in my opinion, was very expensive and I said this could put 1MDB in bad light again," he said.

Wan Aizuddin: When was this?  
Hazem: Roughly 2012-2013 when I was the COO.

Wan Aizuddin: Am I right to say in spite of all this, you were still promoted to CEO?

Hazem: Yes.  
Wan Aizuddin: So there was no danger to your career in 1MDB.

Hazem: I think I'm highlighting the frustration but despite that, you need to follow the instructions (from Low). This was the culture – of course no one said it, but if you work in any company, if you're not happy with the boss, you quit.

Wan Aizuddin: You don't have to follow Jho Low's instructions carte blanche, you can voice your concerns.

Hazem: As CEO if you don't do what is asked, you leave.

Wan Aizuddin: But you are the CEO calling the shots, how can you take instructions?

Hazem: In 1MDB it was like that.

Najib, 68, is facing four charges of abusing his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.28bil in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

The hearing before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues today.

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## Witness: Low had power to choose 1MDB CEO

By NURBAITI HAMDAN  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Fugitive financier Low Taek Jho did not have a formal position in 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), but he was "the man of the company" who could have chosen the next CEO, the High Court heard.

Prosecution witness Mohd Hazem Abd Rahman, 47, who was 1MDB CEO between 2013 and 2015, testified that Low, better known as Jho Low, had the authority to determine who would be the next CEO.

He was under cross-examination by defence counsel Wan Aizuddin Wan Mohammed in the 1MDB trial here yesterday.

Wan Aizuddin was referring the witness to an email he sent to his former colleague, 1MDB chief financial officer Azmi Tahir, where Hazem said he could recommend Azmi's name to Low if Azmi was interested to rise to the position.

Wan Aizuddin: You said if Azmi is interested in the job, you will rec-



**Cross-examination:** Hazem describes Low as 'the man' of the company and that Low was kept informed of 1MDB happenings. — Bernama

ommend his name to Jho Low. Did you do this in the end?

Hazem: I didn't.

Wan Aizuddin: So are you saying that Jho Low is in the position to decide who can be the next CEO?

Hazem: Yes.

The witness described Low as "the man" of the company and it was the culture to keep Low informed of 1MDB happenings.

To another question, Hazem said

Low's name was concealed from official meetings as this was the way it should be.

"Low told me this in our meeting in Putrajaya when I was being offered the COO (chief operating officer) position in 2012.

"This is the culture that has been practised. Everyone is aware and understood that on record, his name was never to be mentioned. It was well understood," Hazem said.

Wan Aizuddin: When Jho Low mentioned to you 'don't mention my name', did you question him back? That this is not right, that you are not a puppet?

Hazem: This is the instruction. This is a company on top of the Prime Minister's Office.

Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, 68, is facing four charges of abusing his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.28bil in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

The hearing before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues today.

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## Umno benefited from 1MDB, claims former CEO

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Despite the absence of evidence, a former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) chief executive officer told the High Court he still believed Umno benefited from the sovereign wealth fund.

Prosecution witness Mohd Hazem Abd Rahman, 47, testified that it was a matter of whether "to follow along or not" when it came to servicing Umno in 1MDB.

This prompted lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who is representing Datuk Seri Najib Razak, to remark that Hazem was the first witness to tell the court that 1MDB was set up for Umno.

He pointed out the previous 1MDB CEO who testified, Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halini, had never said 1MDB was for Umno.

Hazem said he believed this because he was told by fugitive financier Low Taek Jho in a meeting in which Najib's late principal private secretary Datuk Azlin Alias was present.

Shafee: Now you know benefiting

Umno like that is criminal?

Hazem: Yes.

Shafee: Throughout your two and a half years as CEO, did you see any evidence of Umno benefiting?

Hazem: No.

Shafee: Did you see any benefit or money being sent to Najib?

Hazem: No.

The lawyer also suggested that Hazem should have reached out to Najib if he found something troubling within 1MDB.

"But I did not have direct access to him. My avenue of access was through Azlin and (then 1MDB chairman) Tan Sri Lodin Wok Kamaruddin," Hazem said during cross-examination yesterday.

He, however, admitted that he did not make an effort to see Najib.

Shafee suggested that Hazem was not being honest claiming he was terrified of Najib and tolerated the criminality in 1MDB.

"That is my opinion then," Hazem replied.

Shafee pressed further and said

that the only way Hazem had tolerated two and a half years of 1MDB's criminal activity was because he was a part of it.

Shafee: If you are part of it, you can tolerate it.

Hazem: I disagree.

Shafee then asked Hazem about the bonus he received from 1MDB upon his resignation from the company.

Shafee: How much was it?

Hazem: The gross amount was probably more than RM2mil.

Shafee: It was RM2.7mil.

The witness agreed.

Najib, 68, is facing four charges of abusing his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.28bil in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

The hearing before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues today.

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Date in court: Najib making his way to the High Court in Kuala Lumpur.  
— Bernama



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# Najib fails in bid to recuse Sri Ram

## High Court dismisses attempt after finding it baseless and misplaced

By NURBAITI HAMDAN  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has failed to recuse ad hoc prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram from leading the prosecution team in his 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) audit report tampering trial.

High Court judge Justice Mohamed Zaini Mazlan dismissed the application after finding that the applicant's claims against the former Federal Court judge to be baseless and misplaced.

Najib had contended that a communication between former attorney general Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali and Sri Ram, which was contained in Apandi's supporting affidavit, was proof that Sri Ram was biased towards him.

Najib had also contended that Sri Ram was involved in the investigation against him.

On the communication between Apandi and Sri Ram, the judge said that Sri Ram was entitled to have his personal opinion and it remained just a personal opinion.

"It would have been a different consideration if he had demonstrated his bias when carrying out his duty as a senior public prosecutor," Justice Zaini said in delivering his decision here yesterday.

He added that the communication took place before Sri Ram's appointment in the case.

Justice Zaini said Najib had never made complaints over Sri Ram's conduct in the

1MDB-related trials and this showed Sri Ram had been "above board" in his conduct as a senior public prosecutor.

On Najib's allegation that Sri Ram had been involved in the investigation against him, the court ruled that it was "unmeritorious".

"There is no cogent evidence to support the applicant's allegation and it remains purely hypothetical.

"This issue had in any event been canvassed by the applicant's application (Najib) in the previous applications highlighted by the prosecution as respondent. It is a moot point.

"It has been deliberated and decided on. The decisions held by the other courts should remain and not be regurgitated again," said the judge.

This is Najib's third attempt to recuse Sri Ram from prosecuting the 1MDB-linked criminal cases.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib appeared for the prosecution while lawyer Nur Syahirah Hanapiah represented Najib.

The 1MDB audit report trial will resume on Feb 22.

Najib, 68, is charged with using his position to order amendments to the 1MDB final audit report before it was presented to the Public Accounts Committee to avoid any action being taken against him, while former 1MDB CEO Arul Kanda Kandasamy is charged with abetting Najib in making the amendments to the report to protect the former prime minister from being subjected to action.



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# Najib fails in bid to halt 1MDB trial

## Application in US for names of those linked to graft scandal cited as reason

By NURBAITI HAMDAN  
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Datuk Seri Najib Razak had applied to the United States court to obtain the names of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) officials involved in the bribery scandal with a former partner of Goldman Sachs Group Inc in Asia, the High Court was told.

This was mentioned in Najib's application before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah to have the ongoing 1MDB trial – which was supposed to last until tomorrow for this week – to be postponed.

The judge denied the application and ordered for the trial to continue.

Najib's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah raised the matter yesterday and sought the postponement, saying the outcome

of the application in the court in Manhattan, filed on Nov 17, 2020, would have a huge impact on the current trial.

The defence, he said, was seeking documents and testimony through the US court for information on the alleged bribery of 1MDB officials by former Goldman official Tim Leissner.

"In the proceedings in the US where Leissner and Goldman Sachs pleaded guilty, Leissner had actually said and admitted to the fact that he had paid bribes to several officials in 1MDB.

"We have therefore filed a discovery application and asked Leissner and Goldman Sachs to reveal the names of those that they have bribed," Shafee said.

The disclosures of the names, he added, was relevant to Najib's defence to prove the prosecution

witnesses lacked credibility and were merely instruments of fugitive financier Low Taek Jho.

He said the defence planned to recall several witnesses, including former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, to the stand for cross-examination upon obtaining the relevant documents from the US application.

"This (discovery) is extremely relevant because I have asked Shahrol pertaining to why he simply follows what Jho Low says.

"Likewise, you will find quite a shocking revelation by ex-1MDB CEO Mohd Hazem Abd Rahman (current witness) because he was told that he must follow (instructions from Jho Low)," he added.

Shafee said this had bearing as to whether the witnesses in the trial had been receiving illicit payments, which was the subject matter of the

disclosure in the proceedings of Leissner and Goldman Sachs in the United States.

He also asked the court to postpone the 1MDB trial as the defence needed more time to prepare for Najib's appeal hearing in the SRC International Sdn Bhd case.

Deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib said the prosecution would not interfere in the application in the United States as it was not a party to it and its only concern was for the trial to move forward.

"However, since the application in the US is important to the defence, we leave it to the court to decide whether the trial should be adjourned or continue," Akram said.

Justice Sequerah then rejected the postponement application but

vacated the trial dates set in April.

"I do sympathise with your situation but we have to proceed," he said to Shafee.

The judge also said that the defence could recall any prosecution witnesses for cross-examination if the need arises from matters relating to the US court application.

The trial continues with Hazem on the stand.

On a separate matter, Shafee told the press outside of court that the defence had filed a notice of appeal yesterday against a separate High Court's decision that dismissed Najib's application to have Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram recused from leading the 1MDB audit tampering trial prosecution team.

"We are appealing because we have got an overwhelming reason to say that the disqualification of Sri Ram is almost inevitable," he said.

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## Religious dept officer denies accepting bribes

**JOHOR BARU:** A Johor Islamic Religious Department (JainJ) assistant officer has been slapped with three bribery charges amounting to RM26,800.

Nurul Hazlin Hashim, 37, pleaded not guilty to the charges against her before Sessions Court judge Ahmad Kamal Arifin Ismail here yesterday.

She allegedly accepted a bribe from a supply company at a bank in Taman Mohd Yassin in Simpang Renggam between Oct 27 and Nov 4, 2019.

In the first charge, Nurul Hazlin is accused of accepting a bribe worth RM12,800 from the company's owner as an inducement for her to recommend the company for a seminar project titled "Seminar Aqidah Ahli Sunnah Wal Jamaah Saudara Kita Negeri Johor 2019" between Oct 27 and Oct 29.

In the second and third charges, she is alleged to have accepted a bribe worth RM7,000 on Oct 29 and another RM7,000 on Nov 4 from the same company as an inducement to obtain the project titled "Program Santuni Orang Asli Siri 2/2019" and "Program Santuni Orang Asli Siri 3/2019".

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## **AADK officer and ex-staff member plead not guilty to bribery**

**ALOR SETAR:** A National Anti-Drugs Agency (AADK) assistant officer and a former staff member pleaded not guilty in the Sessions Court to accepting a RM3,000 bribe five years ago.

Kulim AADK assistant officer Norzarenawati Osman, 38, and Erwan Yahya, 45, a former assistant at Kuala Muda AADK, claimed trial after the charge was read out to them before judge Murtazadi Amran.

The two accused were jointly charged with accepting the bribe from Muhammad Russul Muhammad Radzi as an inducement to release a man who tested positive for syabu.

The offence was allegedly committed at an empty house in Bandar Puteri Jaya, Sungai Petani, at 3pm on Dec 7, 2016.

The charge, under Section 17(a) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act, punishable under Section 24(1) of the same Act, and read together with Section 32 of the Penal Code, carries a jail term of up to 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the value of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

Erwan was charged with receiving a bribe of RM3,000 from Muhammad Russul as an inducement to release the same man in a Proton Iswara car in front of a shoplot in Bandar Puteri Jaya at 5.30pm on the same date.

The judge allowed Norzarenawati bail of RM8,000 with one surety while Erwan was released on RM6,000 bail with one surety.

The court fixed March 17 for mention of the case.

They were also instructed to report to the MACC office on the first week of every month and surrender their passports to the court.

The prosecution was conducted by MACC prosecuting officer Mohamad Fauzee Azizan while Norzarenawati was unrepresented and Alias Ibrahim represented Erwan. — Bernama



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# State political leader held

## MACC confirms arrest linked to 2019 ministry project

By MARTIN CARVALHO  
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**PETALING JAYA:** Investigations into a ministry project have led to the arrest of the state deputy chairman of a political party with links to a former minister, as well as the seizure of cash totalling RM1.2mil, says the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

It did not name the politician who is suspected of having received bribes from several companies that procured a project from the ministry in 2019.

"Also detained (Tuesday) night were two company directors in Ipoh," the MACC said in a statement yesterday.

It added that it seized RM1.2mil believed to be bribe money that was kept at a house and office of a proxy of the former minister and the deputy chairman himself.

"Also seized was a luxury car used by the former minister as an official car that is believed to belong to a company director whose project was approved," the MACC said.

The graftbusters also said that several company and individual accounts totalling RM77mil have been frozen in the ongoing investigations.

The MACC requested that all parties stop speculating on the case pending the outcome of its investigations.

Meanwhile, PKR vice-president Datuk Dr Xavier Jayakumar said his reputation

as an elected representative is being sullied by media reports linking him to a party colleague who is being investigated for graft.

"I have never condoned corruption in the Pakatan Harapan government, and I will never abandon my values as one of the early reformists in PKR," said the Kuala Langat MP, who was a minister in the Pakatan government, in a press statement.

The party colleague in question is Perak PKR deputy chief MA Tinagaran, who has been remanded for six days by the MACC.

There is also talk alleging Tinagaran's actions were linked to the then Water, Land and Natural Resources Ministry helmed by Dr Jayakumar.

The former minister, in his statement, said that all major decisions by ministries during the Pakatan administration could not be done arbitrarily and must be approved collectively by its Cabinet.

He added that it had been wrongly reported in the media that Tinagaran, who was a close family friend, was his aide.

Dr Jayakumar said the onus was on leaders implicated in graft to prove their accountability.

In Ipoh, one of Tinagaran's lawyers, Baldip Singh, said his client would be held at the MACC's office in Putrajaya during the remand period.

He has been remanded for six days to assist MACC investigations into an engineer-

ing company in Perak.

A magistrate's court in Putrajaya issued the remand order yesterday.

Baldip said initially the MACC asked for a seven-day remand so that it would be able to carry out further investigations and also to record statements from witnesses.

Baldip said he and another lawyer, Harjit Singh, objected to the seven-day remand, and the magistrate then granted six days instead.

"My client is being investigated under Section 16 (AA) of the MACC Act. No car of my client was confiscated as reported and only RM17,000 was taken from my client's house."

"Also, my client is not the aide of former Water, Land and Natural Resources minister Datuk Dr Xavier Jayakumar," he said when contacted yesterday.

Perak PKR chairman Farhash Wafa Salvador Rizal Mubarak confirmed on Tuesday that his deputy was called in by the MACC to assist in investigations.

Farhash yesterday alleged that a news portal had painted a negative picture by twisting facts.

"No asset or cash amounting to millions were confiscated, but cash amounting to RM17,000 in small denominations was taken for investigation purposes."

"I want to remind that dissemination of false news is an offence under Sections 211 and 233 of the Multimedia and Communications Act 1998," he said.

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## MACC busts syndicate that sold revenue stamps

By MAZWIN NIK ANIS  
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**PUTRAJAYA:** The country has lost RM15mil in revenue – no thanks to a syndicate believed to have sold government revenue stamps and work permit pass stickers (PLKS) for foreign workers at a steal.

The syndicate is said to have worked hand in glove with the staff of a security printing company, who stole these original documents from its storage facility.

Graft busters put an end to the illegal activities following a major blitz, codenamed Ops Sticker, on Wednesday and arrested seven suspected syndicate members aged between 30 and 39.

But sources with knowledge of the investigation said this was not the end of the case, which might see more arrests.

During investigation, officials found that RM250 government revenue stamps were sold for between RM40 and RM60 per piece in the black market while the RM10 stamps were priced at RM5 or RM6 each.

"The PLKS stickers, which have all the security features used by the Immigration Department, were sold by the syndicate for about RM700 or RM800 a piece.

"To have a PLKS sticker issued by the department, one is charged between RM2,000 and RM3,000 depending on the sector," said a source.

During the raid, Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) investigators seized 2,500 pieces of government revenue stamps valued at RM12.5mil in total.

Revenue stamps are used for duty stamp payment in sales and purchase agreements and are usually purchased at post offices or

from the Inland Revenue Board.

Four of the suspects were remanded on Wednesday until Feb 21 while three others were remanded for six days beginning yesterday.

Investigators believed that the syndicate had been operating for the past three years, raking in millions in profit before its activities were detected.

Confirming the arrests, MACC deputy chief commissioner (operations) Datuk Seri Ahmad Khusairi Yahaya said it viewed the syndicate's activities seriously as this had resulted in losses and leakages of government revenue.

"Intelligence and surveillance work on the syndicate was carried out for six months by our officers and the Immigration Department before we made the arrests," he said.

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## Kadi's office clerk charged, JPJ personnel remanded

By REMAR NORDIN  
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**JOHOR BARU:** An administrative assistant at the Kluang district kadi's office has been charged in the Sessions Court here with 21 counts of making false claims amounting to RM16,800.

Norazah Abdul Aziz, 49, claimed trial to all the charges before Judge Ahmad Kamal Arifin Ismail yesterday.

According to the charge sheets, she committed the offences between January 2015 and September 2016, by submitting claims under the "kelas takmir Masjid dan surau" programme worth RM800 each month.

Norazah is accused of committing the offences while serving at the Kluang district kadi office, which is under the Johor Islamic Religious Department.

If convicted under the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009, she faces a maximum jail term of 20 years and a fine of five times the value of the claims or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

Ahmad Kamal set bail at RM10,000 in one surety and fixed



**In custody:** JPJ personnel being led to the Magistrate's Court in Johor Baru where they were remanded for seven days on corruption charges involving motor vehicle licences. — Bernama

March 8 for next mention of the case.

He also ordered Norazah to hand over her passport to the court and to report to the MACC office every month until her case is over.

MACC prosecution officer Nur Mahirah Mohd Pauzi prosecuted the case while lawyer Siti Norbaya Amin represented the accused.

Norazah posted bail.

In an unrelated case, the

Magistrate Court's here granted a seven-day remand order on seven Road Transport Department (JPJ) personnel currently being investigated by the MACC.

Assistant registrar Nurnadiana Mamat issued the seven-day remand order until Feb 28.

On Sunday, the MACC arrested the individuals aged 27 to 42 for alleged corruption involving 1,000 motor vehicle licences.

According to an MACC source, the suspects – two women and five men – were those manning JPJ counters in Johor.

"The suspects are believed to have manipulated JPJ's MySikap system to handle the licences and had caused losses of about RM3.1mil in road taxes to the state JPJ within six months between July and December 2019," said the source.



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## Man fined RM12,500 for making false OT claims

KUALA LUMPUR: A former assistant health officer was fined RM12,500 by the Sessions Court for fraudulently using documents to claim more than RM3,000 in overtime pay.

Mohd Johan Fazlan Sa'don, 42, pleaded guilty before judge Rozina

Ayob here yesterday.

He admitted to five counts of fraudulently using the documents to claim RM644.63, RM709.09, RM547.93, RM966.94 and RM483.47 at the salary unit office of the Health Ministry in Putrajaya between June 1 and Oct 1, 2015.

The total amount for the five consecutive months was RM3,352.06.

The charge under Section 471 of the Penal Code carries imprisonment of up to two years or a fine or both, upon conviction.

Deputy public prosecutor Abd Muntaqim Abdul Aziz appeared for

the prosecution while Mohd Johan was represented by Nur Fazrin Ahmad.

The court fined him RM2,500 for each charge and ordered him to serve 15 months in jail if he fails to pay the fine.

Mohd Johan paid the fine.

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## **Contractor fined for falsifying documents**

**IPOH:** A contractor was fined RM10,000 for falsifying documents over completion of jobs at a polytechnic in the state three years ago.

Sessions Court judge S. Indra Nehru ordered the accused to serve nine months' jail if he failed to pay the fine.

Syed Basri Syed Lin, 52, who was unrepresented, pleaded guilty to the charge yesterday.

According to the charge, Syed Basri was alleged to have committed the offence at Politeknik Sultan Azlan Shah in Slim on Nov 6, 2018.

He was said to have fraudulently used a genuine document on the completion of work over water supply maintenance, panel overhauls and water supply system at the polytechnic's pump house valued at RM5,200.

The accused was charged under Section 471 of the Penal Code.

In a separate case, a 53-year-old contractor claimed trial for two bribery charges filed against him. Lai Kim Seong pleaded not guilty to both charges.

In the first charge, Lai was accused of giving RM700 as a bribe to a MyEG Sdn Bhd customer service officer to issue three temporary foreign worker permits (PLKS) at a restaurant in Ipoh around 11.40am on Jan 18, 2017.

For the second charge, he was accused of giving RM1,000 to another officer from the same company to issue two PLKS at Ipoh Garden here at 3.55pm on Feb 13, 2017.

He was charged under Section 16(b)(A) of the MACC Act 2009 and punishable under Section 24(1) of the same Act.

The offence carries a maximum-jail term of 20 years and a fine of five times the amount of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

Lawyer Amrick Singh Sandhu, who represented Lai, requested for a RM5,000 bail for both charges.

"My client is taking care of his family, including his child who is still in college.

"He is also suffering from diabetes," he said.

Indra Nehru set bail at RM12,000 for both charges and fixed June 10 for mention.

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## Cop in the dock, wife still at large in MACC case

**IPOH:** A policeman has claimed trial at a Sessions Court here to 25 counts of abetting his wife in making false salary claims for over RM200,000.

Mohamad Iqbal Fakhruddin Roslan, 31, a lance corporal based in Shah Alam, pleaded not guilty to all the charges before judge Indra Nehru yesterday.

He was charged under Section 18 of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009.

If found guilty, he faces a jail sentence of up to 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the value of bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

According to the charge sheet, Mohamad Iqbal allegedly commit-

ted the offences between May 2018, and June 2020, together with his wife Siti Aisyah Mohamad Amir, 31, who is still at large, at a pharmaceutical company that she worked at.

Siti Aisyah, according to the charge sheet, was a human resource executive at Hovid Bhd here, and with the intention of deceiving the company, had submitted false monthly salary claims amounting to RM263,810.85 under Mohamad Iqbal's account despite him not even being an employee of the company.

MACC deputy public prosecutor Nurul Wahida Jalaluddin requested the court deny bail, reasoning that the accused could go missing just like his wife.

"He is not cooperating with us to help track down his wife, and if bail is granted, he could possibly go missing as well," she said.

Mohamad Iqbal's lawyer Mohd Redzuan Mohamed Yusoff requested that bail be set at RM2,000 for each charge, noting that his client had surrendered to MACC.

"Bail should not be allowed if the prosecution can prove that he has the tendency to flee, but in this case, he surrendered," he added.

Indra fixed bail in total for RM125,000 with two sureties, with additional terms that the accused must report himself twice in a month at the MACC office.

She fixed June 17 for mention. Bail was not posted.



**Charged:** Mohamad Iqbal (left) leaving the Sessions Court where he claimed trial to 25 counts for abetting his wife to make false claims.



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## Senior cop and three others remanded over graft

**GEORGE TOWN:** A senior police officer with the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) has been remanded with three other men for allegedly receiving monthly bribes to protect and leak information on drug trafficking syndicates in the state over the past few years.

The four suspects – comprising the 43-year-old ASP, a 40-year-old Lans Korporal, 36-year-old Penang Island City Council (MBPP) employee and a 29-year-old civilian who is a businessman – were detained by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) here to assist in investigations into the bribery case.

Clad in orange lockup T-shirts from MACC, they were produced at the Magistrate's Court here at about 10.30am.

Escorted by MACC officers, the men tried to cover their faces with towels and their T-shirts as they were brought to court.

Assistant registrar Muhammad Azam Md Eusoff allowed the ASP, Lans Korporal and MBPP employee to be remanded for two days until today while the civilian was remanded for four days until Monday.

Muhammad Azam granted the remand order under Section 117 of the Criminal Procedure Code to assist investigations under Section 16(a)(B) of the MACC Act 2009.

The charge under Section 16(a)(B) of the MACC Act 2009 for bribery is punishable under Section 24(1) of the same Act, which carries a maximum jail term of 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the amount or value of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

It is understood that the total amount involving all the suspects was RM500,000.

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## Immigration officer fined RM40,000 for bribery

SEREMBAN: A 34-year-old Immigration officer was fined RM40,000 after he pleaded guilty at the Sessions Court here to two charges of accepting RM2,100 in bribes from an individual.

Judge Madihah Harullah also ordered Mohd Shah Ezywan Abd Rahman to serve 30 days in jail for each offence. However, he needs only to serve them concurrently.

She also ordered that several vehicles, jewellery, designer items

and cash in bank accounts worth some RM1.2mil be forfeited.

Among these were a Subaru Impreza, Honda Civic E-EK2, Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9, Toyota Supra and Louis Vuitton, Coach, Christian Dior and Celine designer bags.

On Jan 26, the accused claimed trial to eight charges under Section 165 of the Penal Code for accepting bribes totalling RM885,950 and another four under section 4(1) of

the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Act 2001.

However, when the case came up for re-mention yesterday, Mohd Shah Ezywan pleaded guilty to two charges under Section 165 of the Penal Code which provides a jail term of up to two years or a fine or both, upon conviction.

Ten other charges, including all four for money laundering, were dropped by the prosecution.

For the first, he was charged with accepting RM1,200 from Ong Bok Hay at a bank in Nilai although he knew that the latter had interest in his official work as an Immigration officer. He committed the offence on July 7, 2019.

For the second, he was accused of accepting RM900 from the same person between March 22, 2020 and May 19, 2020.

The accused was represented by Datuk Salehuddin Saidin.

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## AMMB to pay RM2.83bil to the government

KUALA LUMPUR: The Ministry of Finance (MoF) has announced that AMMB Holdings Bhd (AMMB) has agreed to a RM2.83bil global settlement on all outstanding claims and actions in relation to the AmBank Group's involvement in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) matter.

This latest global settlement is part of the Malaysian government's continuing recovery efforts that it is pursuing against all parties directly or indirectly involved in 1MDB and its related entities.

"This follows the government's successful negotiations on the Goldman Sachs' RM15.8bil (US\$3.9bil) settlement in July 2020," the MoF said in a statement yesterday.

These settlements will not absolve other entities and individuals of their alleged wrongful involvement in 1MDB, and they will continue to be pursued

through the criminal justice system. The global settlement by AMMB also addresses the Securities Commission Malaysia's (SC) requirements on compliance with its laws and guidelines, it said.

As part of the terms for the global settlement, the SC will require AmInvestment Bank Bhd to take corrective measures, including putting in place systems and processes to strengthen their due diligence framework for submission of corporate proposals.

"This latest settlement is beneficial for the Malaysian people. Resolving this through the court system would have cost a lot of time, money, and resources. With this settlement, the payment of the monies will be expedited, instead of being held up by lengthy court battles, and can be utilised to fulfil 1MDB's outstanding obligations," said Finance Minister, Tengku Datuk

Seri Zafrul Aziz in the statement.

This settlement amount is in addition to the RM53.7mil penalty already imposed by Bank Negara and paid by the AmBank Group, which has taken comprehensive measures to address the lapses associated with these transactions.

These include measures under a remediation programme that BNM required the AmBank Group to implement, led by the new board and senior management team currently in place. With these measures, the AmBank Group is well placed to continue safeguarding depositors' funds and shareholders' interests, and its future growth.

"This global settlement will not affect or compromise Malaysia's claims against individuals like Jho Low, Jasmine Loo, and other parties related thereto and who are still being pursued in relation to the 1MDB scandal," he said. — Bernama