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## Sabah 'Watergate' man off with a fine

Key suspect in corruption case given DNAA, but must pay a RM30mil compound. >3

# Let off with a hefty fine

### 'Sabah Watergate' suspect to pay RM30mil compound

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KOTA KINABALU: One of the four key suspects involved in the state's biggest graft probe dubbed the Sabah Watergate scandal has been given a discharge not amounting to acquittal (DNAA) by the special corruption court here.

Teo Chee Kong (pic), the former Sabah Water Department deputy director, was ordered by the Special Corruptions Court here to pay a RM30mil compound following the DNAA yesterday.

Judge Abu Bakar Manat made the order after the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) prosecuting team decided not to proceed with the case.

MACC Legal and Prosecuting Division senior director Datuk



Faridz Gohim Abdullah said the compound is a form of punitive punishment.

Teo, 57, was facing a total of 146 money laundering charges involving RM32.93mil. He was first charged

in December 2017.

Faridz said the act of issuing the compound was a success on the prosecution's part, and that the compound does not affect the charges and ongoing cases involving other suspects in the scandal.

Apart from Teo, the cases against three others are still ongoing with all the accused granted bail.

They are former Sabah Water Department director Awang Mohd Tahir Mohd Talib, 59, his wife Fauziah Puit, 56, and state Finance Ministry adviser and retired deputy director of the department Lim Lam Beng, 67.

They were slapped with separate charges at a Sessions Court for money laundering involving RM61.5mil on Dec 29, 2016.

The corruption case came to light after raids were made at the office

and home of the director and his deputy on Oct 22, 2016.

Investigators were said to have found RM45mil in cash in the director's house and some RM3mil at the office of the other.

There were also jewellery, designer handbags and other possessions seized from these raids.

It was reported earlier in the probe that graftbusters believed that the suspects were siphoning RM3.3bil in funds meant for water projects in Sabah since 2010 through a network of companies linked to their families.

The MACC recorded the statements of 200 witnesses in its probe during which it had seized or frozen some RM114.5mil in cash, bank accounts, unit trusts and other assets within and outside the country.

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## School principal held over power abuse

**KOTA KINABALU:** A school principal has been arrested for allegedly abusing his power by giving a supply contract worth RM36,000 to his family-owned company here.

The suspect, in his 50s, was arrested at about 10am yesterday at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office here.

State MACC director Datuk S. Karunanithy said the principal was believed to have appointed the company owned by his wife and younger brother for the project meant for the school he worked in.

"The suspect will be charged at the Kota Kinabalu special corruption court soon," he said in a statement.

He said to date, the MACC had seen the arrest and charging of 13 principals and headmasters for various graft related offences since 2019.

Karunanithy said following these arrests, a series of anti-graft programmes were held together with the Education Department and schools statewide.

On another matter, an officer of a government agency in the Tawau district was detained for allegedly abusing his power to buy a car for his wife recently.

The suspect, in his 40s, is accused of using his position in the agency to allow his wife to obtain a car under disposal, owned by the agency, for a price of about RM15,000.

He was detained at the MACC office here at about 9am yesterday.