

One more day for Najib's RM42m SRC appeal hearing

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The Court of Appeal extended the hearing of Najib Abdul Razak's RM42 million SRC International corruption appeal for one more day to May 6.

This is after the three-person bench this afternoon sternly lectured the former premier's legal team to make substantive submissions that get to the point.

The bench's chairperson, Abdul Karim Abdul Jalil, was also visibly upset when issuing the reminder to defence lawyer Harvinderjit Singh.

Earlier today, for more than an hour, the lawyer submitted on procedural aspects of the case, including on the admissibility of certain documents during the criminal trial at the high court.

Najib is appealing to quash his guilty verdict and sentence in relation to seven charges of abuse of power, criminal breach of trust and money laundering over RM42 million of funds from SRC.

Previously on April 8, the Court of Appeal had also reminded Najib's legal team to avoid repeating submissions.

Najib's appeal was originally set for 12 days from April 5 until 22. Later, on the application of his defence team, the bench set additional hearing days on April 27 and 28.

Karim today interjected in the lawyer's submissions, asking him to be more targeted and specific in submissions.

"All these arguments, are you trying to sow doubt in the CBT or Amla (money laundering charges under the Anti-Money Laundering Act) (charges)? To rebut what? Just tell us directly.

"The most important thing is to make it clear, so we can see clearer, or else berclaru kita semua (we become confused).

"Give us submissions that stick to our minds, not lose it from our minds," Karim told Harvinderjit.

During the exchange, lead deputy public prosecutor V Sithambaram then stood up and remarked tongue-in-cheek that "If Yang Arif is not firm, we would be here

until Hari Raya Haji.”

Harvinderjit then promised to keep his submissions on point, adding that he needed another half day to wrap up his part of submissions.

Then Najib’s lead defence counsel Muhammad Shafee Abdullah informed the Court of Appeal that Najib has a separate 1MDB-linked criminal trial before the Kuala Lumpur High Court next week.

Previously, High Court judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah fixed May 3 to 6 for the resumption of Najib’s RM2.28 billion corruption trial.

Karim then fixed May 6 for an additional hearing of Najib’s SRC appeal. The other members of the Court of Appeal bench today were judges Vazeer Alam Mydin Meera and Has Zanah Mehat.

On July 28 last year, the Kuala Lumpur High Court convicted Najib on one count of abuse of power, three counts of CBT and three counts of money laundering in relation to RM42 million of funds from SRC.

In making the guilty verdict at the end of the defence stage on that day, trial judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali then sentenced Najib to 12 years in jail and a fine of

RM210 million.

The lower court allowed the defence team's application for a stay of the sentence, pending the disposal of his appeal.

SRC, which was once a subsidiary of troubled sovereign wealth fund 1MDB, later became fully owned by the Minister of Finance Incorporated (MOF Inc).

Besides being the former premier, Najib also used to be finance minister (which made him then the sole shareholder of MoF Inc), SRC's adviser emeritus, and chairperson of 1MDB's board of advisers.

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