

## **I was shocked at order to destroy 1MDB audit report – witness**

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1MDB AUDIT TRIAL | Madinah Mohamad testified that she was shocked on finding out there were orders to amend the original audit report on 1MDB.

The former auditor-general also told the Kuala Lumpur High Court that she was shocked that there was an order to destroy the original copies of the audit report.

The 12th prosecution witness was giving her oral evidence during today's 1MDB audit report trial against former prime minister Najib Abdul Razak and the sovereign wealth fund's former CEO Arul Kanda Kandasamy.

During cross-examination by lead defence counsel Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, she said she was shocked when National Audit Department (NAD) officer Nor Salwani Muhammad informed her about the orders during a meeting in March 2017.

During previous proceedings before trial judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan on Dec 22 last year, Madinah (above) testified that she made the decision not to destroy the 1MDB audit report with watermark "09", following her meeting with Nor Salwani.

Madinah had testified then that Nor Salwani told her that there were two versions of the 1MDB audit report, with the watermark "09" version being the original unaltered version.

The witness had said that Nor Salwani told her she had been keeping the original version so that it could be handed to the former to decide whether it should be destroyed or not due to it containing material information and evidence on 1MDB.

During today's proceedings, while being questioned by Shafee, Madinah was explaining her reaction to what was being told to her by Nor Salwani.

"I was shocked as I did not know there were two copies. I was shocked that she (Nor Salwani) said that Ambrin (Buang, the auditor-general before Madinah) had orders to amend (the original 1MDB audit report) and that she (Nor Salwani) had orders to destroy the printed (original) copies, but she kept one (original 1MDB audit report) under her chair.

“I was shocked that Ambrin was instructed to amend the original copy and that Nor Salwani was instructed to destroy the copies meant to be tabled to the PAC (Public Accounts Committee in 2016),” the witness said.

When Shafee asked whether she knew who gave the orders, Madinah said she did not ask Nor Salwani as she was then also due to meet a separate group of officers under her.

Madinah also testified that she thought then that a wrong was committed through the orders to amend the original 1MDB audit report as well as to destroy the original copies.

Shafee: Did you think a wrong was committed?

Madinah: Yes.

Shafee: Wrong along the lines of criminality, somebody “fixing” (manipulating) the report. A criminal act?

Madinah: I just knew it was wrong for the (then) auditor-general (Ambrin) to be pressured to amend what has been finalised copy of the auditor-general’s report, and for Nor Salwani to be instructed to destroy all the (original reports).

## **Original copies declassified**

Back in 2019 during the trial of the case, the fifth prosecution witness Nor Salwani testified that she secretly kept one of the original copies of the 1DMB audit report, which the NAD prepared in 2016.

She testified that her boss at the time - Ambrin - had ordered that all of the copies be destroyed to prevent leaks. Only the modified copy was submitted to the PAC.

Nor Salwani's copy of the audit report carried the watermark "09". This document was tendered as evidence in the present trial.

However, Madinah today agreed with Shafee that other than putting the original copies of the report under lock and key, she took no other action over the matter until May 2018.

The witness said that she declassified the original copies, following then premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad having told the media on May 12 that year, that the police should lift the Official Secrets Act (OSA) classification over the report.

On that day, Mahathir said the declassification should be done so he could study the 1MDB original audit report.

Madinah also agreed with Shafee that during her time under the Najib administration of one year and four months, she did not try to seek clarification from the then-premier about the issue.

The trial before Zaini is set to resume around 2.30pm this afternoon.

Najib was charged with using his position to order amendments to 1MDB's final audit report before it was presented to the PAC in order to prevent any action against him.

Co-accused Arul Kanda was charged with abetting Najib in making the amendments.

The charges are framed under Section 23 (1) of the MACC Act 2009, which specify a jail term of up to 20 years and a fine of no less than five times the amount of gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher.

The prosecution is contending that a decision to make the amendments was taken during a meeting on Feb 24, 2016, at the office of the then chief secretary to the government Ali Hamsa.

It was alleged this was done to remove or alter certain portions of the 1MDB

audit report, including dropping the issue of wanted fugitive Low Taek Jho's (Jho Low) attendance at the fund's board meetings.

Another issue that was allegedly dropped from the 1MDB audit report was the two conflicting 2014 financial statements of the sovereign wealth fund.

Besides Ali and Arul Kanda, others who were present at the meeting were Ambrin, former NAD officer Saadatul Nafisah Ahmad Bashir, Najib's former chief private secretary Shukry Salleh, and the then Attorney-General's Chambers representative Dzul kifli Ahmad.

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