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IRRELEVANT

# RCI: NO NEED TO RECALL MURAD

In rejecting Dr M's application, Sidek says commission has obtained all evidence needed from witness

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**T**UN Dr Mahathir Mohamad's application to have former Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) assistant governor Datuk Abdul Murad Khalid recalled to testify before the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) was yesterday rejected.

In dismissing the former prime

minister's application that was made through his lawyer Mohamed Haniff Khatri Abdulla, RCI chairman Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan said it was irrelevant to have Murad called back as whatever statement needed from the witness had been obtained during the proceedings.

"We are of the view that all the issues that needed evidence from the witness have been obtained for the commission to make a conclusion," Sidek said before closing the RCI proceedings.

Haniff had on Aug 24, requested for Murad to be further questioned by the RCI.

Murad was the third RCI witness and in his testimony had revealed that a massive RM31.5 billion was lost between 1991 and 1994 due to BNM's foreign exchange (forex) dealings.

In his 42-point testimony, Murad said he had told then BNM governor, the late Tan Sri Jaafar Hussein, and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who was then finance minister, of the losses.

Murad said he was certain that



Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan

there were no investigations launched by BNM or any other enforcement agency on the forex losses during that period.

"If the losses were disclosed, the finance minister, prime minister (at the time, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad), and the cabinet would be blamed and be held responsible," he said.

Murad only appeared once as a witness before the RCI during day one of the proceedings.

The RCI on BNM's forex losses in the 1980s and 1990s was set up following a cabinet meeting, soon

after the *New Straits Times* published an interview with Murad.

In the exclusive interview on Jan 27, Murad claimed that the forex losses had seen the nation's foreign currency reserves in US dollar, British pound and Japanese yen all "going down the drain".

Murad, who left BNM in 1999, had said no one was ever investigated, or charged for what he described as the biggest forex losses in the world.

The setting up of the RCI and its membership received the consent of Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V. **Additional reporting by Hana Naz Harun**

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