



Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak (right) arriving at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex yesterday. PIC BY SADDAM YUSOFF

POSTPONED

COURT GRANTS NAJIB STAY IN SRC TRIAL

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Trial date to be fixed after disposal of appeal on transfer certificate withdrawal

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FORMER prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's trial over the charges linked to SRC International Sdn Bhd funds scheduled for yesterday has been postponed.

This followed a decision by a three-man Court of Appeal bench, comprising Datuk Ahmad Asmawi, Datuk Mohamad Zabidin Mohd Diah and Datuk Yew Jen Kie, to allow the stay application, filed by his lawyers last Friday, to postpone the trial on the seven charges linked to SRC International.

The judges unanimously decided that the date of the trial would be fixed after the disposal of Najib's appeal on the withdrawal of a certificate of transfer by the public prosecutor.

"The submission by the respondent has merit and there are special circumstances for the

court to grant the stay.

"We opined that if a stay is not granted and the trial proceeds, it will render the proceedings a nullity that would result in a waste of time of the persons involved.

"We are also of the view that we did not find any evidence of legal tactics of delaying the hearing," said Ahmadi, who led the bench.

Najib's lead counsel, Tan Sri Dr Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, when met outside the court, said the stay was granted because if the defendant won the main trial, the entire proceedings could be deemed null and void.

"It will be wasted. There will be a retrial because of nullity.

"The court also found that there is absolutely no evidence of delay on our part because the public prosecutor alleged that we were delaying," he added.

Attorney-General Tommy Thomas, who led the prosecution team, however, refused to comment on the decision.

Last week, Najib sought to stay the trial relating to his seven cor-

ruption charges linked to funds amounting to RM42 million belonging to SRC International pending the appellate court's decision on his appeal relating to the withdrawal of a certificate of transfer by the public prosecutor.

High Court judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali had allowed an application by the Attorney-General's Chambers to withdraw the certificate to transfer the seven charges against Najib from the Sessions Court to the High Court.

Najib subsequently filed an appeal with the Court of Appeal in a bid to set aside the High Court ruling granting the public prosecutor leave to withdraw the certificate of transfer.

The 66-year-old Pekan member of parliament, on July 4 last year, was charged with three counts of criminal breach of trust and one charge of abusing his position over SRC International funds amounting to RM42 million.

Following that, on Aug 8 last year, he was charged with another three counts of money laundering involving the same amount of money.