Court to hear Najib's appeals on March 11 and 12

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THE Court of Appeal (COA) set March 11 and 12 to hear four appeals by former Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak to reverse a High Court's ruling over the interlocutory applications in Najib's seven criminal charges relating to SRC International Sdn Bhd's funds totalling RM42 million.

Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) Budiman Lutfi Mohamed said COA Registrar Datuk Norsharidah Awang fixed the dates after meeting him, DPP Muhammad Izzat Fauzan and lawyer Harvinderjit Singh who is acting for Najib in the chambers.

Budiman said Najib's lawyer had informed the court that the defence needed 10 days from the date they (defence) received the appeal record on withdrawing a certificate of transfer for them to file the petition of appeal.

"Therefore, the court fixed March 11 and 12 to hear the appeal together with another three appeals by the appellant (Najib). The court also ordered both parties to file written submissions by March 4 or 5," he told reporters after the case was mentioned in chambers.

Budiman also said Attorney General Tommy Thomas had written a letter to the COA president on Wednesday to get an early hearing date on the appeals.

On the two days, the COA would hear the appeals by Najib on his application for a gag order to prohibit the media from discussing the merits of his criminal cases; his application for the recovery of documents and statements and his challenge on the appointment of lawyer Datuk Sulaiman Abdullah as the lead prosecutor in his seven charges pertaining to SRC International.

All the three applications were dismissed by Kuala Lumpur High Court Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali

The COA would also hear Najib's appeal on the withdrawal of the transfer certificate.

Najib filed the appeal to quash Mohd Nazlan's decision on Feb 7, to allow the prosecution led by Thomas to withdraw the certificate to transfer Najib's case from the Sessions Court to the High Court.

Thomas informed Mohd Nazlan that the prosecution made the move due to the Federal Court's decisions in the Semenyih Jaya (2017) and M Indira Gandhi (2018) cases, which raised a doubt in respect of the exercise of the powers by the public prosecutor to transfer a case from the Sessions Court to the High Court.

He said the prosecution withdrew the certificate to avoid any possible argument that the transfer was a nullity.

— *Bernama*