

Najib asks for postponement of PAC case trial

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KUALA LUMPUR: Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has filed an application to postpone his third trial in which he is accused of tampering with the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) audit report.

Dubbed the PAC (Public Accounts Committee) case, the hearing was scheduled to commence on Monday.

Najib filed the notice of motion on Wednesday through Messrs Shafee & Co.

He named the public prosecutor and former 1MDB CEO Arul Kanda Kandasamy, who will be jointly tried with him, as respondents.

In his supporting affidavit, Najib asked for the hearing to be moved from Nov 18 to Jan 13 on the grounds that he would suffer prejudice

if he and his lawyers were not allowed time to prepare for his defence in the SRC International case, where he had been ordered to enter his defence by a different court.

The SRC defence trial is slated to commence on Dec 3.

"This gives me and my defence team a limited time of about two weeks to prepare for my defence, including reviewing the witnesses who should either be offered for cross-examination or made available, interviewing the potential defence witnesses and reviewing the statements of the potential witnesses or undertake any other action necessary to effectively prepare for the defence case," he said.

The adjournment, he said, was for him to be afforded a fair trial in pursuance of his constitutional rights and also in the best interest of the administration of justice.

No date has been fixed for the hearing of this motion, as of now.

The PAC trial has been fixed for 15 days before Justice Mohamed Zaini Mazlan.

The dates are fixed from Nov 18 to 29, and Jan 13 to 17 next year and the prosecution is expected to call about 30 witnesses to testify in the proceedings.

On Dec 12 last year, Najib was charged with using his position to order amendments to the 1MDB final audit report before it was tabled to the PAC to avoid any action against him.

He was charged, in his capacity as a public officer, which was as the prime minister, with using the position to obtain gratification for himself, which was to evade disciplinary, civil or criminal action against him in connection with 1MDB, by ordering alterations to the 1MDB final audit report before it was finalised

and tabled to the PAC, where he directly had interest in.

The Pekan MP was accused of committing the offence at the Complex of the Prime Minister's Department, Federal Government's Administrative Centre, Putrajaya, between Feb 22 and 26, 2016.

Arul Kanda was charged with abetting Najib in making amendments to the report to protect the then prime minister from being subjected to disciplinary, civil or criminal action in connection with 1MDB at the same place and time.

Besides the SRC trial, Najib, 66, is also being tried in the High Court for four charges of using his position to obtain bribes totalling RM2.3bil from 1MDB funds and 21 charges of money laundering involving the same amount.