

COURT ORDERS NAJIB TO ENTER DEFENCE

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Ex-PM opts to give evidence under oath after judge says prima facie case has been established

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THE High Court yesterday found that the prosecution has established a prima facie case against former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak on all seven charges of abusing his position for gratification, criminal breach of trust and money laundering involving RM42 million of SRC International Sdn Bhd's funds, and therefore has ordered him to enter his defence.



Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali said the prosecution had successfully adduced credible evidence proving each and every essential ingredient of the offences.

He then gave Najib three options, which were giving sworn

evidence from the witness box, giving an unsworn statement from the dock, where he cannot be cross-examined, or choose to remain silent, in which the court must proceed to convict him.

Najib, 66, who was the sixth prime minister from April 2009 to May last year, appeared calm after hearing the ruling.

He later said he would give evidence under oath after each and every option was briefed to him by a court interpreter.

By choosing this option, he would be subjected to cross-examination by the prosecution.

He is the first prime minister to find himself in the dock and is looking at a jail term of up to 20 years if found guilty.

Among those who were present in the courtroom included Na-

jib's daughter, Nooryana Najwa, former minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Umno Supreme Council member Datuk Mohd Puad Zarkashi, MIC deputy president Datuk Seri M. Saravanan and other supporters.

Nooryana was seen shaking her head as the judge read out the summary judgment while other supporters quietly left the courtroom after the hearing

was adjourned.

Nazlan, who took about an hour to read out his summary judgment, dissected each and every charge against Najib and gave the reasoning behind his ruling.

He started off with the offence of abuse of position, where Najib, as prime minister and finance minister, allegedly used his position to commit bribery involving RM42 million through his participation or involvement in the decision to provide government guarantees for loans from the Retirement Fund Inc (KWAP) to SRC International amounting to RM4 billion.

He was charged with committing the offence at the Prime Minister's Office, Presint 1, Putrajaya, the Federal Territory of Putrajaya, between Aug 17, 2011, and Feb 8, 2012.

The charge under Section 23 of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2009 and punishable under Section 24 of the same act provides for imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of not less than five times the amount or value of the bribe or RM10,000, whichever is higher, upon conviction.

Nazlan said Najib had used his position as prime minister and finance minister to establish SRC International.

"Although it was stated to be a

When we overthrew the not-so-Islamic leaders, the country was able to see a new government taking over without the use of violence."

He reiterated that the PH government would spare no effort to correct all wrongs committed by the previous administration.

"We are trying our best to correct all the un-Islamic things that were done before.

"Of course, we are not perfect. You (the people) can see it. And you can also criticise us so that we will stay on the right path.

"This is because we feel it is our duty to bring back the country to the true teachings of Islam, as well as to have good governance where justice is upheld all the time and the people's welfare is of great importance to the government.

"We would like to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. We would like to correct all that, but it will take time."



Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex yesterday.