

'NARRATIVE IS STILL THE SAME'

COURT ALLOWS PROSECUTION TO AMEND 3 CHARGES

Judge also allows prosecution to tender bank statements prepared by the police

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THE High Court has allowed the prosecution to amend three of Datuk Seri Najib Razak's corruption charges for misappropriating funds belonging to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

Presiding judge Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah also allowed the prosecution to tender bank statements prepared by the police's Anti-Money Laundering Criminal Investigation Division assistant director Assistant Commissioner Foo Wei Min.

Foo, who is also the investigating officer, is in the witness stand to testify in the case.

Sequerah in his ruling said the prosecution had a right to amend the charges before it wrapped up the case.

"The amendment concerned only figures and amounts... the narrative is still the same.

"This (amendment) did not prejudice the accused," he said.

The prosecution sought to reduce the amount in the abuse of power case from RM49,930,985.70 to RM 44,570,920.70.

As for the money laundering charges, the prosecution applied to amend the amount in the 10th and 12th charges, reducing them from RM652,600,000 to RM 515,666,277.51 and from RM12,436,711.87 to RM11,411,646.34, respectively.

On Oct 24, deputy public prosecutor Kamal Baharin Omar said the application (to amend the charges) was done under Article 145 of the Constitution, read together with Section 376 of the Criminal Procedural Code.

As soon as the charges were amended, the prosecution requested that they be read to Najib again, where the former prime minister maintained his innocence regarding the latest amount.

The trial, however, was cut short as Najib's lead counsel, Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, asked the court to adjourn the proceeding as his client had not fully recovered after he tested positive for Covid-19 a few days ago.

Shafee informed the court that two of his lawyers had also tested positive for Covid-19 recently.

The prosecution did not object to the application.

The court allowed the adjournment and the hearing will resume today.

On Nov 2, Najib's special officer, Muhamad Mukhlis Maghribi, in a statement, confirmed that the former Pekan member of parliament was rushed to the hospital after complaining of coming down with a fever on Oct 31.

Checks conducted by the doctor confirmed that the former Umno president tested positive for Covid-19.

Najib was released from hospital and returned to Kajang Prison on Sunday.

Najib, 70, is facing four charges of using his position to obtain bribes totalling RM2.3 billion from 1MDB funds and 21 charges of money laundering involving the same amount.

He is serving a 12-year jail sentence at Kajang Prison after the Federal Court had, on Aug 23, 2022, upheld the conviction and jail term, and a fine of RM210 million against him after finding him guilty of misappropriating SRC International Sdn Bhd funds amounting to RM42 million.

