

RM27m MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES

'NAJIB CAN APPLY FOR ACQUITTAL IN SEPTEMBER'

High Court judge says ex-PM may do so if prosecution is not ready for trial

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak can apply for a discharge not amounting to an acquittal (DNAA) or a discharge and acquittal (DAA) in his RM27 million money laundering charges during the trial slated for September.

High Court judge K. Muniandy said the former prime minister could argue this case if the prosecution had yet to decide on his

representation letter for a review of all charges.

The court has fixed five days — Sept 17, 18, 19, 23 and 24 — for the trial dates.

"After hearing the prosecution's and Najib's defence arguments, and considering that today is a case management, the court will set a date for the trial.

"If the prosecution is not ready for the trial, the defence may apply for a DNAA or DAA during trial.

"I have also fixed March 12 for next case management to determine the status of documents, witness statements and update on the representation," he said.

Earlier, deputy public prosecutor Mohd Ashrof Adrin Kamarul said the Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC) needed more time to review the application,



The High Court has fixed five days in September for Datuk Seri Najib Razak's trial on money laundering charges. BERNAMA PIC

which was sent to it in August last year.

"I am sorry *Yang Arif* (Your Honour), the prosecution is unable to make a decision regarding the representation submitted by Shafee & Co.

"At the previous case management, the court was informed that it would not consider another case management, but we humbly request one more case management date.

"If the court cannot consider it, I leave it to the court's discretion to proceed with this matter," he said.

Najib's defence counsel, Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who was not amused with the situation, pressed for the court to grant his client a full acquittal

or DAA.

"The prosecution appears to face difficulty in deciding on the representation, which suggests that the charges against my client may be considered baseless.

"A total of 26 case managements have been conducted before the previous judge Mohamed Zaini Mazlan and four before you (Muniandy).

"I believe a DAA order can be issued," he said.

On Dec 1 last year, the same court set Jan 19 as the final date for the A-GC to respond to Najib's representation.

On Feb 3, 2019, Najib claimed trial to three charges of money laundering by accepting proceeds from illegal activities amounting to RM27 million

through his three AmPrivate Banking accounts.

He allegedly committed all the offences at AmIslamic Bank Bhd, AmBank Group Building, No. 55, Jalan Raja Chulan, on July 8, 2014 under Section 4 (1) (a) of the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing Act 2001.

He faces a maximum fine of RM5 million or imprisonment of up to five years, or both, if convicted.

Najib is serving a 12-year jail sentence after the Federal Court, 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.